LET ME SPEAK!

A study in teachers’ attitudes towards speaking English in the language classroom

Daniel Ask, Solveig Ivarsson & Lisa Lönqvist
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Handledare: Richard Baldwin

Examinator: Peter Erlandsson

Background:
The curriculum for English underlines the importance of speaking. Pupils and teachers should speak English in the classroom. The study’s theoretical frame is based on Dysthe socio-cultural perspective. Pupils need to use the language in order to gain knowledge. We have used Krashen’s five hypotheses and Kugel’s five stages in our study. Other literature that has been used is previous curriculums for English, Backlund, Tholin and Hedge. These writers use theories about learning and the importance of developing language. The study took place at three different schools in western Sweden.

Aim:
The purpose of the study is to investigate teachers’ attitudes towards speaking English in the language classroom in relation to writing, listening and reading.

Procedure:
The procedure used is qualitative interviews. By using qualitative interviews the respondents had the ability to ask questions and underline and clarify their answers when needed. The interviews were recorded on mp-3 players. They were later transcribed and analyzed in order to find a valid result

Results:
The result that emerges is that teachers consider speaking the most important tool in the classroom. They feel that it is important for students to be able to communicate in English. Even though they think that speaking is the most important aspect they are aware that it is not easy to live up to. The teachers believe that speaking anxieties are one of the reasons of why children in school do not speak English.
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1. Introduction

The English language is one of the most important global languages in the world today (Crystal, 2004). In several contacts with people from different nationalities and in our professional life, we use this language. Often when we go abroad, English is the language that helps us to communicate with the local people.

Learning a new language consist of several parts, these parts are speaking, writing, listening and reading. All of these parts are equally important according to the syllabuses for English. Therefore it is not said that the different parts are valued the same by teachers. Potential issues that could influence the teachers’ way of teaching will be discussed.

During our education at the University of Borås we have studied a lot about the English language and how it is taught. Four of the most common tools to learn a language are to speak, write, listen and read it (Lpo 94 - Läroplanen för det obligatoriska skolväsendet 1994). Although we feel that this is quite obvious we can still see that not all of these parts are used equally. Throughout our practice we have one shared experience which is that students do not speak that much.

During almost 30 weeks of Academic Vocational Training it is of our opinion that there seems to be a great variation of how languages being thought. We believe that we have an indication of how the reality in schools is. During our education we have had a great progress in knowledge which will progress even more with professional experience. This experience can not be taught at the university but one has to experience it by oneself in real situations.

Our aim is to research a group of teachers’ attitudes concerning the use of spoken language in their ways of teaching. We would like to see if there are differences or similarities in planning and executing lessons among teachers. We have chosen to concentrate on the teachers’ point of view in the matter of student ability and opportunities to learn in the language classroom, which is a minor part in the learning of a second language.

We believe that teachers’ attitudes towards English vary among them and this might affect their teaching. Therefore it is of our interest to look into what attitudes exist towards speaking English in the classroom.

Throughout our education we have noticed that speaking gets neglected in relation to the other four parts. We estimate that writing and listening are given more lesson time than speaking and reading, although it is speaking that the most of the student will come in contact with in the future.

1.1 Definitions

In our study we will use expressions that are very clear for us as researchers but we are of the opinion that we need to explain some words more than others;

Lpo 94 – Skolverket in Sweden has decided what the teachers are going to teach the pupils in compulsory schools. These goals to aim for and the curriculum today are called Läroplanen för obligatoriska skolan -94, Lpo -94, because it came in use 1994. This curriculum is the one used at the moment.
Lgr 62, Lgr 69, Lgr 80 - Former syllabuses for compulsory school and forerunners to Lpo – 94.

Chatting – When people communicate by writing messages with each other on the Internet using the computer. This is very common among the youth today, and often they use programs like MSN.

Skype – A program to download from the Internet onto the computer. When using this you can talk for free to other people around the world. Instead of using the ordinary telephone when talking you use a headset and microphone and talk via the computer. If you have a wide access Internet there will be no charge on the telephone bill.

Didactics - How you reflect and analyse learning situations and from there on modify and develop your further teaching.

Pedagogic - Knowledge about teaching, strategies and tactics that you use while teaching.

National test – All pupils in grade nine, in every school in Sweden, must do a special test that Skolverket has created.

Cognitive - Descend from the word cognition and refers to the process of thought, for example in psychology and cognitive research it refers to an information processing view of an individuals psychological functions.

2. Purpose
Our purpose is to find out teachers attitudes and how they work with speaking in the English classroom.

2.1 Questions at issue
- How do teachers work with the syllabus when it comes to achieve the goal in speaking English?
- How can practical influences effect the teachers’ way of teaching a second language?
3. Background

3.1 History
Bratt (1977) writes that during the 19th century it was possible for pupils’ parents to let their children learn English in private schools. Trade increased with English businessmen and so did the spread of the language. When immigration started toward USA many ordinary persons were forced to learn English so they could retain communication with their relatives.

Malmberg (1993) continues with another important aspect, industrialisation started and Sweden experienced this during the late 19th century. A lot of products were imported from England and the manuals were in English. Now knowledge was needed to translate instruction books. The big breakthrough for the language was when pupils were able to go to school for nine years, this happened in 1962. All pupils could choose an easy or difficult course in English. According to Lönskov (1982) there still were sceptics who thought it was unnecessarily that all pupils learned English.

Tholin (2003) writes in his study that it was not until 1941 that English was introduced in the Swedish school as the first foreign language. In the first syllabus in the Swedish compulsory school, Lgr – 62, the main goal was to learn linguistic patterns. The pupils should not reflect or take any responsibility over their learning of the language. The author writes that most of the lessons were used to translate texts or learning grammar. In this syllabus there were exercises in grammar which ought to be done by the teachers. Those exercises were removed in Lgr-69. When using Lgr-62 the teachers had little freedom to plan lessons.

Tholin (2003) means that it was a big change in the functional language view from Lgr-62 to Lgr-80. Now the teachers should concentrate upon skills the pupils need in situations where they were going to use the language. This was a big step from the time when teachers should do special grammar drills to focus upon the pupils learning what they should do with their language skills.

3.2 The curriculum and syllabuses for the English subject
In the curriculum and syllabuses for the English subject (Skolverket, 2000) it is stated that the pupils should develop a communicative ability and a desire to learn the language. The curriculum is clear that the education in English should be directed to create use a resourceful knowledge for the pupils in their future studies and careers. The ability to communicate in English is of great importance in the fast developing international and information bound society. The education should also help and promote the pupils knowledge of the English speaking world and cultures. The knowledge that the pupils acquire in school is meant to be the start of something more. Employers are looking for people who can communicate in English. The ability to speak English is essential in our society, people travel and English is a worldwide language that enables people to communicate.

These are some of the goals the teachers must consider when they plan the lessons regarding the oral language.
Goals to aim for

- Develop their ability to use English to communicate in speech and writing.
- Deepen their understanding of spoken English in different situations and contexts.
- Develop their ability to actively take part in discussions and written communication, express their own thoughts in English, as well as understand the views and experiences of others.
- Develop their ability to use English orally in different contexts in order to relate, describe and explain, as well as give reasons for their views.  
  
Skolverket, 2000

Goals that pupils should have attained by the end of the ninth year in school

Pupils should

- Understand clear speech, even though regional in nature, in instructions, narratives and descriptions concerning familiar conditions and their own areas of interest.
- Be able to actively take part in discussions on familiar subjects and with the help of different strategies to communicate effectively.
- Be able to orally relate and describe something which they have seen, heard, experienced or read, as well as express and give their reasons on how they understand a topic that is of personal importance.  
  
Skolverket, 2000

The goals in the curriculum are about how the pupils can develop as much as possible. The goals to aim for are the goals that teachers aim from the fifth year of school and onwards. The goals to attain by the ninth year in school are the goals that pupils must reach to get a grade at the end of year nine. The curriculum mentions the importance of communication but it does not mention grammar at all. This is something that has changed with the different curriculum. In earlier curricula grammar has had an important role. Now the weight lies on communication instead.

Hedge (2000) writes of the importance of communication skills. She continues that it is important for the pupils to learn how to speak competently to keep up in our society. She also writes about the importance of input and the opportunities to produce meaningful and controlled output.

3.3 Field of research

3.3.1 Kim Rivera on second language learning

Kim-Rivera (1999) writes that the Swedish school has a nine year school with opportunities to study at high school. Most students go to state compulsory schools. In 1993 Skolverket approved the new National Curriculum for English.

According to Kim-Rivera (1999) teachers in Sweden have a great freedom to plan their lessons with methods which are suitable for students. The teachers’ goals are to develop the oral language, the written language, listening and reading skills. In most cases they use text-and workbooks. Every school decides on their own when the pupils should start to be educated in the English language. Kim-Rivera also believe that this subject is a global language and the pupils will listen to many different dialects such as those from New Zealand, Australia, Kenya, Ghana, India also in addition to the USA and Great Britain. This will make it easier for the pupils when they later in life will speak to different people.
Kim-Rivera (1999) argues that pupils should be encouraged to speak English during their lessons. All instructions shall be given in the target language. One oral task is that the teacher asks a question and the pupils will answer. There is only one right answer. When the pupils are ready for more difficult tasks they are encouraged to do role plays with interviews, take part in discussions, music and songs. Another assignment is to fortify the student’s ability to orally express themselves in English by leading discussions during the lessons. The teachers will talk about spoken English grammar during the lessons and that is more important than the written ones. Her opinion is that it is more important to be able to speak and communicate with other than to write texts. In her study she found that most of the students were very good in the oral National test and 80% understand what the teachers were saying in English during the lessons. 55% had learned most of the English in school and 30% had learned all of the language in the school.

Kim-Rivera (1999) writes that English is the most widespread foreign language in Sweden and the children will meet it every day on their spare time when they are for example watching TV, DVDs or using the computer. Many students go abroad to visit English speaking schools and will stay there for some weeks just to learn the language. Many students think it is important to be able to speak English and they succeed with it.

3.3.2 Stephen Krashen

Stephen Krashen (Krashen & Terell, 2000) describes learning and language acquisition; he uses a model of five hypotheses. By using this communicative language teaching the pupils will learn more when they are exposed of the language during the lessons and of course in real life.

1. Acquisition – learning hypothesis

Krashen (Krashen & Terell, 2000) believes that we learn a second language we must be exposed of it as the same way the little children pick up words for their first language – and not think of right or wrong to the language form. All learning takes parts in a natural process like when we move to a country where the people talks the language or when we listen to music or watch movies with the target language. The goal is not to analyze sentences but instead use a language which sounds and feels right to be able to communicate with people. However, he thinks learning is an aware process when we study words and grammatical rules in special books like Workbook in special situations in school. He is of the opinion that these two methods distinguish in the learning process and are not similar to each other. To correct a pupil that made a mistake does not have any effect on the mechanism in the brain which gains the language naturally by acquisition. The author means that often the language learns in a special classrooms in unnatural situations, and not automatically. This is learning of the language by rules and grammar and prevents the pupils of learning the language from a natural way. If the pupils instead will learn the language by speaking (acquisition) it will give the pupils more freedom of the language. If they will not be corrected by the teachers when errors occurs, in the end they will learn the right pronunciation of a word.

2. The monitor hypothesis

Krashen (Krashen & Terell, 2000) claims that we all have some kind of a natural monitor which supervises and reviews the written or spoken language when we are going to use it. He writes that there are three different kinds of Monitor users; the Over-users, the Under-users
and the Optimal-users. Some people who do not want to make any mistakes belong to the

**Over-users** and they monitor the language continuously. Often this group has problems
with fluency when it comes to speaking. They can feel hampered in their speaking
knowledge. Krashen argues that teachers often belong in this group and transfer this way of
learning to their pupils. The **Under-user** do not have any problem due to fluency in speaking,
instead they care less about rights and wrongs. As a replacement of correctness this group has
problems and makes a lot of mistakes. According to him the best thing is to have optimal
**Monitor-users** and balance the mistakes. It is better to have the **Optimal-users** of the monitor
and balance the usage. By not using the monitor during oral communications, we gain fluency
and do not care about rights or wrongs. Using the monitor during writing exercises will help
correct written sentences according to grammar and rules. Krashen believes that this will
create the best opportunities for learning the language.

### 3. The natural order hypothesis

Krashen (Krashen & Terell, 2000) is convinced that when a person will learn a new language
it will always take place in a special order. He is of the opinion that learners find it easier to
use ing-form and plural-s then use a correct form of third person singulars in the present tense.
It is not only new students who make this mistake with tense but also advanced second
language speakers.

### 4. The input hypothesis

When we learn a language Krashen (Krashen & Terell, 2000) believes we take in information
which is more difficult then we all ready know. Therefore it is of great importance that we are
exposed to more than just one level of the language. If we just settle with one level of texts-
and listening exercises, we will not reach the next level in our knowledge of the language. We
must always want to reach knowledge a little bit more than we did yesterday.

### 5. The affective filter hypothesis

Attitudes towards learning a language are very important. If a student does not have the
motivation to learn Krashen (Krashen & Terell, 2000) is of the opinion that it is very difficult
to learn anything. This affective filter is a symbolic wall which prevents learners from
acquiring knowledge even if input is available. Learners who are bored and tired of the
lessons in school will have this filter on in every moment they try to learn anything. But there
are learners who have other filter on the whole time. He mentions filters like self-confidence
and anxiety which will make the pupils not willing to learn if the filters are negative.

### 3.3.3 Practical influence on classroom practice

Lundgren (1979) argues that in a classroom there are students trying to share space with their
peers. In a large group with approximately twenty students, it is harder for the students to
keep eye contact with each other which reduces the opportunity to get feedback. What you
also could say about these group situations is that many students become silent. There are
differences in how much every student speaks. In the study about how students take part in
speaking exercises in large groups. Lundgren enlightens us about these differences among
students. He also establishes the issue that almost fifteen students together speak as much as
four of their classmates do. This means that those fifteen almost do not speak at all.
Eriksson and Tholin (1997) argue about the atmosphere in the classroom and how important it is to consider when it comes to what students dare to do in front of their classmates. It is important that the students are aware that it is okay to make mistakes when one is trying to learn a second language it is natural part of the process.

Furthermore Åberg (1994) says that every class has its own atmosphere and group dynamics which the entire class has been creating together. The group can provide the opportunity to make you feel that you belong, but there are also risks that you could get expelled or/and bullied. To be accepted by other group members is a fundamental need in human life. There are studies that show us that student achievements are more dependent on students’ status and position inside the group than their actual talent.

Backlund (2000) writes about speaking in the classroom. Fear of speaking in public is the reason that people do not speak in public situations and in different democratic processes which means that you need to speak in public. The author establishes that the fear is something that exists and should be accepted. It is important that we learn how to control it, to prevent us from not daring to say our meaning. Further she writes about how to control this and mentions practice as the solution. Therefore is it of great importance that teachers start early to develop students’ oral ability, and also strive for an atmosphere that is understanding and safe.

3.3.4 Kugel on teachers different levels of teaching
Kugel (1993) writes about different stages in teachers’ development. He divides them into five stages of development. The stages are based on how teachers look at themselves as professionals. To transfer from one stage to another the teacher need to come to realizations with certain issues to develop in their careers.

1. Self

This stage is all about the teacher her/himself. According to Kugel (1993) the teachers looks at themselves like students in this stage. It is all about how they present themselves, they are afraid of not being able to answer questions correct and therefore being looked at as frauds. In this first stage they act much as students and they feel vulnerable.

After a while most teachers go through a transition and the focus is shifted from self into subject.

2. Subject

Kugel (1993) argues that this phase is all about the subject. The teachers are learning more about their subject than they did as students. They think of themselves as bearer of information that they can pass on to their students. The subject is the most important. If students do not understand it is not the teachers fault but the students themselves. They blame student of not working hard enough or not be bright enough without thinking of their own teaching.

The second transition comes when teachers realize that their superb knowledge in their subject is not transferred to their students as they thought. This could happen when they correct a test that has a lot of errors or while listening to students talking during class. The
teacher might think that they are discussing his or hers very interesting lecture when they in fact discuss the party coming up next weekend. It could be incidents like these that make teachers come to stage 3. (ibid)

3. **Student**

According to Kugel (1993) the teachers become aware of their students during this stage. They notice that students are not the same and they learn in different ways. The teachers try to teach in different ways to be able to fill the different needs among students.

The third phase transition takes place when teachers realize that it is more to do than to teach in a classroom. Kugel (1993) argues that students are not just passive receivers of knowledge but active learners. The students also have to learn something.

4. **Student as active**

During this stage teachers encourage their student to think discuss, write in order to develop their minds. Kugel (1993) argues that teachers during this stage think that they are the ones that develop their students’ minds by encouraging such activities. Kugel (1993) writes that learning cannot be taught by professors or teachers, they can help but they cannot create the process. The teachers see themselves as coaches instead of experts. A coach helps to improve or to learn something but he/she do not do it for you.

During the fourth transition Kugel (1993) claims that the student take a more active part in their teaching than they done previously. This does not mean that the teachers get less work to do. It is a different way of working. They have to stop grading every paper because the students work with different things. They also use the students to grade and assess each other. This means that the students become both teacher and student and they gain more knowledge and interest in the subject by being both teacher and student.

5. **Student as independent**

This is the final stage and Kugel (1993) writes that is demands a lot from the teacher to be able to see students as independent learners. In this stage the student are allowed to control what they want to learn and that can make it difficult for teachers that are not willing to show that they lack any knowledge in their subject. This stage is all teachers helping students learn about the subject without giving them all information.

3.3.5 Teachers’ options to delegate responsibilities to the students.

Tholin (2001, p 218-219) writes about portfolios and how pupils are able to follow their own development in a special subject. Every pupil has their own portfolio and they decide what materials they want to fill it with. It can be a first draft of a text together with the final result, logbook about their works and reflections together with evaluations of their own learning. The author continues with that the whole idea is that pupil has the responsibility for their own learning. Before starting a new period all pupils write a guide line of what they want to improve or want to learn more about together with individual goal settings. All materials like wordlists, pictures, homework or oral recorded files are saved in the portfolio during the period and at the end the pupils presents the result for the teacher. Tholin thinks it is important that the pupils should motivate why they have done or chosen a special way to solve a
problem or task. Even what the pupil thinks the work should be graded with and motivation for that.

Hedge (2000, p 75-105) is of the opinion that pupils should have the ability to decide of their own lessons and how they want to solve a special problem. The teachers must let the pupils take responsibility of how they best want to develop knowledge in a subject and even start to reflect on why and how they did it in a special way. The teachers’ main goal is not to supply their pupils with different exercises but instead guide their pupils into learning autonomy. Hedge argues that the teacher should not be an expert who only tells the pupils correct facts but instead let the pupils found out for themselves the answers by using different aids. The pupils must consider what they need to improve on and work with that question. Today in school the teachers must ask the pupils; what can I do for you?
4. Theoretical frame.
Following three theories are based on the idea socio cultural perspective which means co-operation with others leads to developing new knowledge. Both Vygotskij and Dewey ideas were based on this perspective. They are also a model for Olga Dysthe who is a Norwegian scientist. She is our theoretical frame but we will shortly present Vygotskij and Dewey.

4.1 The socio cultural perspective
Dysthe (2005 p 71) argues that the most fundamental aspect is that all understanding is an active and social part and this means that acquisition creates together in a group with others. We learn together with others and by learning new thing from someone that knows a bit more than the student, this will lead to new knowledge in a special subject. If the pupils work together in a group all members have different knowledge and together by co-operation they will succeed with a task. By this way of working with dialogs and co-operations in teamwork, knowledge will be created in a positive point of view. Dysthe calls this a social constructivism.

Dysthe ( 2003 p 36-37) continues with that it is the pupil who will take responsibility for its own development because it is only the pupil who has this learning capacity and will perform this task. The teacher will not have any central part in learning but only be there as a guide. She refers to individual constructivism.

No one of these three social cultural theoreticians deny that it is a learning process within the individual person but this is not interesting because it is the relationships on the social part that define the contents in every individual process. Language is very important because when we talk to each other, a process will begin and not until that the learning process is able to start ( Dysthe, 2003 p 31).

4.1.1 Dysthe in the spoken language
Dysthe (2005) writes that a dialog is between at least two faces and permits the other person to answer. Both parts have a responsibility to try to continue speaking. The meaning of life is to make conversation with different people by building questions, listening and also agreeing with each other. A human being is defined by the relationship to the other and uses the language to communicate with. It is the same in the classroom. All learning takes place in a room of teamwork - either through dialog with real voices here and now or with written texts which are going to be read.

The author is of the opinion that the traditional education where the teacher asks and a pupil answers is not a dialog because they change subjects as soon as they get a correct answer. The teachers seldom follow up the pupil’s answers. A discussion is when someone starts to talk about a subject and more people will follow by giving their opinion and the conversation shall continue into the next discussion. When pupils should talk in the classroom the teacher must let them determine the subject and allow them to dominate the conversation. It is not easy for the teacher but necessary to give the responsibility to the pupils. (ibid)

Dysthe (2005) claims that we use different types of social language when we speak to each other, due to occupations, ages or social classes. When many pupils get together in a classroom they create a multiplicity of voices in combination with the teacher and the
textbook texts. She continues with explaining that polyphony is another word when several
people talk at the same time as they are able to do in discussions or conversations. There are
pupils who have different strong opinions and therefore opportunities to dominate over the
other voices. It is a humanistic way of thinking when you are willing to listen to other’s
voices and consider them important. It is an essential democratic assignment that the pupils
will learn to listen.

The author continues with the relationship between oral and written language and writes that
most people think written language is more important and supercilious than the spoken
language. The written word is the “correct” language and the verbal communication is just a
copy of the same. This language has therefore more status than the oral. Everybody can speak
but to write you must learn and practice a great deal. Many students who are very good at
English have difficulties in communicating with others. This is because they cannot use
different forms in contexts. They lack words in communication and they will remain silent
among others. (ibid)

4.1.2 Presentation of Dysthe’s models Vygotskij and Dewey

Vygotskij’s (2007) had a cognitive theory. Lev Vygotskij was convinced that language ruled
cognitive development and that communication was essential. He wrote about the proximal
zone of development. He explained that all development is created amongst other people but
in different ways. The essential subject was the stimulant which made development move
forward and pupils wanted to learn more about the subject. Human beings were by nature a
social creature and wanted to be among other beings - and here we found the stimulant which
is important for everybody.

The central theme in Vygotskij (2007) theory is the way you think and act. What pupils
manage today with help from a person with more competence in the subject they will succeed
with alone tomorrow. The teacher will only be a coach for their learners. As a teacher you
must always remember a pupil’s development and which level is the most advantageous for
him/her. If it is a level that is too high, the pupil will fail and feel disappointed because the
task was too difficult for him/her. If it is too low the pupil will not be challenged by the task
and cannot be as motivated as he/she needs to be. One can say that learning is the key for
development and it is also the driving force towards development. Knowledge must be
conquered. It is like a struggle to try to reach higher results. When we must solve a difficult
assignment Vygotskij believed that if we used the private language and spoke during our
thinking procedure it will be simpler for everybody to succeed with the challenge.

Dewey (1980) argued that the human being was a social person and we all developed together
in a social environment. Here we discover the social rules which are needed and learned from
each other. These situations will continue through the whole life and a person will grow with
the assignments. Social development goes hand in hand with the physiological and they are
equal to each other, no one should dominate the other.

Dewey (1980) argued that pupils must have the opportunities to experiment and try different
sorts of working tasks in their education. Talking is very important, the pupils should speak to
each other about just ordinary situations which have happened in the neighborhood. In school
there must be opportunities to elaborate and experience the environment. Pupils have to
discover the connection and find knowledge in community and adults are a central part in this
social work.
John Dewey is of the opinion that the school is not an isolated part of the community, the teacher that he refers to as coach; shall teach them that they are a part of the society. The teacher rules during the lessons but Dewey does not agree with this way of working in school. He is of the opinion that a student learns things while he or she takes part in the subject. He also means a person will learn knowledge while they create different things. (ibid)
5. Procedure and implementation.

The study was conducted by interviewing teachers in different schools. The teachers have different experiences from school. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The reason for using interview was the possibility of getting a wide perspective of their opinions and to avoid misunderstandings. Another reason was the fact that it was possible to ask the respondents if there were any uncertainties.

5.1 Qualitative interview as survey method

We have used a qualitative research since we wanted to get the overall view in our attempt to (Lökken and Söbstad, 1995). It was important for us to reach an understanding of their thoughts. It was all about taking part of subjective experiences.

Our focus was to understand the teachers’ reality and consider their experience and attitudes. It was important for us that we remained an objective assessment of the answers while analyzing the result. Kvale (2001) writes that a qualitative study is not trustworthy because we must interpret other peoples’ answers and feelings. It is extremely important to use it in the correct situations. We were very open in our minds and did not take any parts for granted.

The aim of our study is to find out teachers’ thoughts about speaking English in school. Therefore interview is a method that suits our survey well. According to Lantz (1993) it is important to choose the method after the selection. The study’s purpose decides the choice of method. Interview provided us with good opportunities for our respondents to express themselves and give reasons for their point of views. Lantz (2007) argues that the directed open interview gives people an possibility to speak freely and reason with themselves in the matter of the subject and their personal feelings, description and values of the phenomenon.

Lantz (2007) also mention the importance of preparation. It is of the utmost importance to use well thought out questions, and that the questions are relevant. Kihlström (2007) argues for the importance of not steering the respondent in any direction, but being as objective as possible. It is not possible to be completely objective, but to have thought about your own pre-understanding and expectations is a good way to start the preparation for the interview. There are several things to consider while interviewing the respondents. Ejvegård (2003) writes of the importance to create a peaceful environment, not stressful. We have tried to follow all of these demands to make our interviews as reliable as possible.

There are several demands to consider when interviewing (Lantz, 2007). It is important that the method gives a reliable result and it must be valid for others to critically review the conclusion. According to Trost (1997) the qualitative method is well suited when one intends to investigate and understand the respondents’ way to reason and react and also when one wants to separate and discern varied action patterns.

5.2 Hermeneutics

According to Thurén (2007, p 95) the purpose with hermeneutic is to understand more than just perceive intellectually. Besides your senses and logical analyze hermeneutics builds its understanding from empathy. This will suit our purpose well because it becomes easier to understand and interpret interviews both from your senses and with empathy. You can
interpret people’s action and personalities like someone’s painting, writing or how someone reacts in certain situations.

Thurén argues further more that positivism can help us understand things from the scientific viewpoint and explain why things occur according to your senses. With help from the hermeneutical theory you can understand it from another perspective, for instance why people are moving from refugee camps. Out of this perspective we can understand the refugees by their feelings and their thoughts. We can understand other people’s feelings and experiences through our selves, empathy. This kind of explanation which relies on peoples understanding in each other, takes place mostly in human science but also in sociology, anthropology and law. (Thurén, 2007)

We will use our understanding and empathy when we interpret the respondents’ answers which could help us understand how they think and feel. Thurén (2007, p 97) mentions that it is important to use your interpretation in the right context, otherwise misunderstandings can occur. But since the field of research is teachers’ attitudes, we feel that the risk for misunderstandings is less than it would be in an unknown field, because of our experience and pre-knowledge in the field.

In short, we will interpret and analyze the correspondents’ answers thoroughly to get a result which we have to analyze furthermore. This will lead to many discussions regarding what the respondents’ really mean and feel. We would also like to understand why they act the way they do. Therefore Thurén (2007) thinks empathy could be used to understand their attitudes and feelings.

5.3 Selection

When we should do our selection for this study we concentrated in three specific schools, Alpha, Beta and Gamma, which are situated in the west of Sweden. The names of the schools were invented, since no one should find out which schools were used in the essay. The Principals of these schools were contacted and they approved to participate. The teacher’s lessons and methods regarding English speaking were in focus and therefore we concentrated only upon the instructors. There were four males and seven females who participated in the study and they all worked with students in grade 7-9. Four teachers were interviewed from Alpha and Beta and three from Gamma. We chose these eleven teachers on our own but all of them are trained English teachers. According to Trost (2005) a small number of interviews are clearer and easier to handle. This will make the information of the interviews appear more distinct and the risk of losing important and essential parts will be reduced.

5.4 Realization/ Implementation

All interviews, except one, took place in the different schools while the teachers had time to sit down and talk with us. We were able to use special rooms where no one else could enter except the teachers; all this made a calm situation where we could speak in private. To increase reliability we recorded all answers with mp3-players and the interviews took approximately half an hour to execute. We made it clear for all the teachers who were involved that the interviews were anonymous and no one else is going to listen to the recordings. We planned the interviews in a way so that lack of time was not any problem (Lantz, 2007). After the teachers have given their thoughts on the questions, all answers were transcribed on the computer. We only wrote down the actual facts and left out sounds such as
coughing and other insignificant sounds. The teachers had an opportunity to read all the answers of their interview and if we had misunderstood any answers they could correct us. We were convinced that this was the best way to check that we had interpreted them correctly.

One interview was held in the teacher’s home since it was difficult to find a point in time which suited both parties and especially the respondent.

5.5 Interpretations

After all the interviews we transcribed them onto the computers and the final result was to be 22 pages of answers. For the interview questions see appendix number 1. We started our analysis by reading all answers that belong to each question from all three schools. Then we talked about every specific question and tried to interpret the information in a proper way. All answers needed to be organized and interpreted. Every question got its own summery on a separate piece of paper. After that we structured all answers and looked for patterns, both similarities and differences. Our aim was to find different patterns for the analysis.

The result has been put together and analyzed from the accumulated data. It has been enhanced with quotations from the respondents. When using quotations, we were very careful to quote them exactly as they expressed themselves. The interviews were held in Swedish and therefore we were forced to translate the quotes from the Swedish language into the English. All quotes are written in both English and Swedish to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations. They are to be read in appendix number 2, the quotes from the answers.
6. Ethics

6.1 Ethical standpoint

According to Kihlström\(^1\) it is important to follow ethical principles when we carry out research. In interviews we deal with the ethic between us as interviewers and the respondents who will answer the questions. To do this we followed Vetenskapsrådet’s (2002) ethical principles of research and refer to the following four main demands/rules:

1. **Information**

This means that we are obliged to inform all parts that are involved in the study why we conduct it, and who is going to read it. We met this demand by talking to the involved teachers and made sure that all questions they may have will be answered. We also made it completely clear that the participation was completely voluntary and they were free to stop the interview at any point. All teachers were informed that these interviews were the bases of our essay.

2. **Consent**

This means that the participants should be aware of their rights and that it is their decision if they want to stop. This rule was followed by informing the respondents before the interviews started.

3. **Confidentiality**

No individual or school which is involved in the interviews will be mentioned. Nor will documents or files be kept in a way which others could get access to them. It is not easy to guarantee anonymity when using interviews, but we met this rule by giving both the respondents and the schools assumed names. All files on our mp-3 were erased after the results had been written. We still had the transcripts of the answers from the interviews but kept them in a safe place.

4. **Use of material**

Information of the collected materials should not be spread further in any way. It is only we who can take part in the information and use it at the compilation that the respondents have agree to participate in. This also means that we cannot save materials and use it in further researches without asking the respondents for their approval. The result of the study is only to be used for it correct purpose. All the answers were used only in this essay and nowhere else.

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\(^1\) Kihlström, S lecture 13 of February 2008 Vetenskapsrådets krav. See appendix number 3.
6.2 Validation and reliability

Validation means that we will study what we intended to study, our purpose and nothing else. It is a measurement that shows if the investigator has investigated what he/she set out to investigate. Validation show if a study is valid and general. Reliability means the way we conduct the study is reliable according to Patel and Davidsson (2003). It is very important not to value the result but to analyze the fact that has occurred and then come to a conclusion. By doing this the study wins reliability according to Thurén (2004).

6.2.1 How reliable are the answers?

To make sure that the study will be reliable we have recorded the interviews, this is to reduce the risk of losing important information that could have effect on the result. We have also only interviewed teachers that are educated teachers of English and teach the subject present time.

Things that can complicate our study are if the teachers we interview try to give us the answers that they think we want. This will reduce the reliability of the study. If we interview teachers with very different values it will be difficult to compare the interview and get a gathered result.
7. Describing the schools and societies
We have chosen to use three different schools in our interviews. The difference is in location, surroundings and number of population. Alfa school is located near the heart of a city, while Gamma-school is to be found in a village in the countryside. Beta-school is situated in between the two others and is the second most populated municipality of the three.

7.1 Alfa school
In Alfa school there are approximately 450 students from year 7-9. It is placed together with pre-school and primary school. The school is situated in an upper middle class area in a major city in western Sweden. Every class has approximately 20 students and one and a half mentor, there are 6 or 7 classes in every year. According to the respondents the teachers at the school work closely together in teams, which are necessary due to a weak management, which has given the teachers more responsibilities and demands. The collegial are fairly young around 30 to 45 years and are really interested in further development. A major part of them takes extra courses besides working. The students at the school are really motivated and the teachers have little problem with unmotivated students.

7.2 Beta school
Beta school is situated in a small town in western Sweden. In this school about 600 students attend classes in years 7-9. Each class consist of about 21-25 students. The school has got four different units. These units consist of a team of teachers, a teacher for special needs and classes of pupils. Each unit is responsible for their classes. It is divided like this to make it easier to work with the pupils. All the teachers know which pupils are in their unit. This makes it easier if they need to discuss the pupils among them. The teachers in each unit meet once every other week to discuss news, tests, students and other issues that are of importance in their profession. Each unit has a leader that has the overall responsibility to make sure that the information will be given to the members in the unit. The leader of each unit has a meeting with the principle and the other leaders of the units each week to discuss what needs to be informed among their colleagues and the other way around.

The students that attend the school are both from the town and from minor villages and communities nearby.

7.3 Gamma school
In Gamma school there are approximate 500 students at the high school. It is situated very close to the countryside. You can also find pre school, a school for children with special needs and classes for education for ages 7-12 all in different buildings. Each mentor have15-16 pupils in each class, together there are ten classes in each year.

The school has got four different units and each unit is responsible for their classes. It is divided like this to make it easier to work with the pupils. The teachers in each unit meet once every other week to discuss news, tests, students and other issues that are of importance in their profession. Each unit has a leader that has the overall responsibility.
8. Results

8.1 The respondents’ background
When analyzing the answers we see that there is a wide spectrum of teachers with different working experiences. We can extract the fact that they became teachers of English depended on that they all knew the language from school and that they share a genuine interest in the language. Another aspect they mention is that English is a subject that is easy to combine with other. Therefore English seems to be a subject that attracts a lot of teachers with different interests.

8.2 Planning the lesson
From analyzing our result we see that most teachers have a great deal of freedom to plan their own lessons. We found out that they often plan the lessons individually but that they share their material and ideas with others. The interviews show that dialogues among colleges are important when it comes to executing the lessons both in how to do it and other practical issues. We also found out that some teachers prefer to plan by themselves instead of with others. Furthermore we can read in our result that when teachers plan their lesson speaking has a significant place.

8.3 Speaking in the classroom
While going through our result we can see that teacher think it is important to speak English during their lessons. They mention the importance of practicing their language both to maintain and to develop their abilities. This goes for both student and teachers;

For several of students this could be their only chance to speak English. Adrian quote 1

Our analyze show that our respondents think it is important to speak as much English as possible. They all seem to strive to use only English during their lessons but our result also show that they feel that they turn to Swedish in some situations though they wish they did not. We found out that typical situations where they turn to Swedish are when giving instructions, homework and when discussing grammatical terms.

I speak Swedish when I talk about grammar. It is important that all students understand what I am talking about. Bodil quote 2

I use only English; it is never ok to use Swedish in class. The only time it could be ok to speak Swedish is when we talk about grammar. Algot quote 3

Furthermore we can see that our respondents point out difficulties with teaching English. They mention that it has to do with the situation there in. We can see in our result that typical situation is when they get asked questions in Swedish and automatically answer in Swedish.

We have decided that we should speak English and only English in our classrooms. But it is impossible to implement. Suddenly a student starts to speak Swedish with me and I without even thinking I reply in Swedish. It is
unnatural for Swedish people, in a Swedish classroom to speak English.
Gunilla, quote 4

Our respondents mention several of tools that they can use while teaching a language, most of them agreed that speaking was one of the most important tools to use. From our result we can see that the teachers’ ambitions are to develop speaking but that there are difficulties during class. Although they mention that writing also is very important and is given a lot of time, they feel that their pupils will have more use of the speaking th language;

Speaking English is the most important of the tools, unfortunately I do not think I succeed as well I want to. This is due to that students are afraid to speak and that they feel insecure about making mistakes. This is very important for the youths today.   Gustav, quote 5

Speaking is the most important because they are going to come in contact with it more than writing. One of few opportunities that will lead to writing in English will probably be if that get a job with that kind of tasks.   Anna, quote 6

To speak, then they can make themselves understood and communicate with others.   Bodil, quote 7

From the question about the importance of speaking in the classroom, we can find in the answers that the teachers thinks it is important that the pupils speak English during class and that you should make use of the opportunities that we have in school. “It is important that they speak as much as possible during class” Gustav, quote 8. The teachers express themselves as if there are occasions where pupils often comes in contact with English outside school but mostly the written and spoken language. This seems to be the reason why the respondent believes that the classroom is one of few occasions where the spoken language is used. Furthermore we could spot that the teachers find it important keep the fluency in the language going since they seem to believe that it is easy to forget or even lose your flow in speaking. “If the students speak English during class they will maintain their language. Language is a continuous knowledge that needs to be updated.” Beata quote 9. We have also spotted from the questions that the respondents believe it is essential that the pupils not only gets to speak the language but also gets to listen to it. It seems like input is of great importance.

It is vital that the students learn different parts of the language. But by speaking they will get a good start. It is also important that they understand spoken language. Input is of great significance according to me.   Bodil, quote 10

According to the result it appears that the teachers do not believe that speaking gets as much room during English class as it should. There seems to be the other tools that fill most of the room already. These tools are writing and listening, which makes the speaking tool stand back. After analyzing the answers it seems like the respondent are not that happy with this situation. “I wish that we were speaking more but as it turns out writing and listening gets most of the time”. Bodil quote 11

8.4 Issues concerning speaking in the classroom.

We can see that the teachers seem to agree that there is a problem with speaking in the classroom. This issue mentions several times during the interviews. It seems to be something
that the teachers are worried about and it also seems to affect their teaching in a negative way. Furthermore we can see in the answers that the teachers have noticed that the pupils are feeling insecure. The teachers tend to argue that the reason why the pupils feel this way is that they are afraid of making mistakes and also that the atmosphere in the classroom can be something that is negative for them and this affect their achievement. In the respondents answers we can also spot that the teachers thinks that the core in learning a language is to make yourself understood.

At the moment it is writing which will get the most time in the lesson. This is because of the reason that the pupils do not want to speak English at all. It is important that the pupils must feel secure in the classroom situation so that they want to speak. Beata, quote 12

After analyzing the answers we could see that our respondents do not seem to be satisfied with their pupils’ ability to take responsibility when it comes to speak in the classroom, because of their pupils lack of interest in talking and discussing during class. Thou the teachers seem to think it is of outmost importance that their pupils take responsibility over their education. In our result we can see look upon this as a problem specifically when it comes to speaking, which also seems to affect the teachers’ way of planning the lessons. The results insinuate that our respondents are trying to inspire their pupils to greater initiative. The teachers seem to encourage them to speak by not correcting their mistakes but instead they let them speak without restraint during class. This is something most teachers seem to agree on according to our result. Furthermore we see that our respondent thinks it is important that their pupils dare to make mistakes and still go on speaking the target language.

Not all of the students do feel secure in the classroom; therefore they speak one at the time. Even if we have a discussion in a group and they sit together and talk. Bodil, quote 13

Our result points out that it is the exercises that decide how you use discussion as a method during the lessons. Our respondents think that it is more practical to let their pupils speak one at a time. We can see that they seem to think that it is easier for teachers to let pupils share their opinions and by doing that holding dialogues with each other. We can see that teachers plan their lessons in a way that gain cooperation among pupils and create a good environment for dialogs but this is something that teachers decide when it should happen.

Our apprehension is that the respondents find it difficult to estimate how many minutes the pupils talk during the lessons. Often it depends on the exercises but it is also individually. The teachers are of the opinion that some pupils speak 20 minutes and some only 2,5 minutes. According to the answers we can see that some speaks a lot and others try to hide from the tasks and they speak English only when the teacher listens to them. A lot of the pupils use Swedish because it is easier. Därmed är det inte sagt att den eleven som pratar mest är den som är duktigast utan det kan förklaras att den eleven är mycket verbal.

We can see from the answers that the teachers think it is very good to talk about the students’ everyday life. Many of the respondents often start the conversations with the teachers’ choice but finish off with the pupils. Although there still are teachers who think both listening and writing take up most of the time during the lessons. In the answers many teachers estimate speaking will not appear until third place after reading and writing tools.
...most of the pupils feel secure with writing and it is easier for them to work with that than to speak. / Abbe, quote 14

8.5 Goals and syllabuses
While analyzing the questions concerning goals and syllabuses we can spot similarities between teachers with similar working experience. They seem to use these syllabuses in similar ways and those who have worked in the profession several years show the syllabuses more seldom then those with shorter experience. Furthermore we could analyse from the respondents’ answers that they use the syllabuses goals when they are planning their lessons. But the differences occur when it comes to how much information the pupils get about these goals. We could see in the results that the respondents plan their lessons after the curriculum’s but those who has worked more years use them more seldom then those with less experience. Instead those with more experience believe that they use them automatically without looking at them and reflecting upon them. They also seem to be more aware of the goals when planning a lesson then those with less experience.

I presume that the textbook and workbook are constructed from the syllabuses and by using them I do not need to look at the syllabuses while planning lessons. Gerd, quote 15

On the questions of the students’ awareness of goals we found that our respondents showed their pupils the goals at least once a year but most of them showed them more often. Some of them tried to incorporate the goal into the document that they give their students. They agreed that the goals became more important in year eight and nine.

The awareness of the syllabus and the goals that the student need to attain by the ninth year increase among the students the longer they attend school. In year seven the goals are very simplified and then they are more detailed in year eight to prepare the students for all the goals in the ninth grade. Algot, quote 16

8.6 Comparing students today
Our respondents can without any problems tell which pupils are weak or strong speakers. From the result we can read that they do not think that this is something that is difficult to do. They seem to agree on that the weak speaker still will get their opportunity to show their speaking abilities. Furthermore we can see that it is common for the pupils to present work they have done together in a group. But there seem to be differences among the respondents when it comes to students that do not want to speak in front of their classmates. The teachers let the students do their presentation with the teacher as the only listener, but we could also find that they used smaller groups which the respondent thought could help the weaker students. Another way to help the weaker students was to actually let them listen and participate in the strong speaker’s group this could according to our result help the weak ones to progress. According to one teacher, the pupils are forced to speak with each other if they sit in smaller groups.

Everybody will have the opportunities to say something. I often go around in the classroom and talk to each student, but I do not ask any difficult questions. My goal is to make them speak English. Strong speakers? I can see who wants
to talk in front of a group, but I am not sure if they are the strongest. I am not sure. Beata, quote 17

From the results we could also see that the respondents believe that feeling secure and positive self confidence is important if the students are going to make any progress with speaking. They would also speak more and would be more active during class. The respondents’ answers also give us an indication that they think it is difficult for the teachers to succeed with this task.

We can see differences in the respondents answers when it comes the teachers view in how the students talk English. The different views could be divided into those who have been working for several years and those who newly graduated. The respondents who had not been working in this occupation for so long tend to argue that the pupils talk a different kind of English, which they refer to as media English. We could also see that their opinion is that pupils talk more now than they did before. They mention music, computer games, movies and different kinds of chatting could be some of the reasons pupils knowledge differs from five years ago. Although the teachers who have been working for several years they say that it is impossible to compare pupils in such a short time as five years. We can see that it was a difficult question to answer since the time aspect was to narrow. From our interviews we can see that teachers mention other differences in school. Things that they mention are the wide spectrum of students today. The respondents point out that a lot of students are very strong speakers and a lot of them are very weak speakers. Earlier there were often a couple of students that excelled and few that were weak. We find that they thought the difference were a lot less fifteen years ago. After analyzing the result we can see that teachers are positive that the pupils use a wider vocabulary today which they think is probably based on movies and games.

I am convinced that everybody in Sweden think the youths are very good in speaking English, but I would say this is a myth. They are good in understanding the language but speaking is worse and this is because of the fear in the group and also the peer pressure. Gustav, quote 18

We found out that teachers have changed their ways of teachings into individualizations with fewer reviews on the whiteboard. Many of them try to involve the pupils’ everyday life in their teaching and with that eliminate the shame in failing different tasks. Some of the teachers want to clarify for the students to reflect on why they to certain task
9. Discussion

In this part of our report we discuss our result and our findings. We will also discuss the procedure used in our work. Some part of this text is written in bold and when that occur we refer to our interview questions. The questions are translated from Swedish and written in bold writing. The questions in Swedish are to be read in appendix 1.

9.1 Discussion of the results

9.1.1 Speaking during the lessons

All of our respondents agree on the importance of speaking English in the classroom, like Dysthe (2003, 2005) and Krashen (Krashen and Terell, 2000) they agree in this important matter. We also got the answer that this is not possible to execute in reality. The respondents seem to see several difficulties with only using the target language. They feel that it would be a utopia to use only English in class. According to Kugel (1993) teacher in the second stage often blame the students instead of their ways of teaching. Kim-Rivera (1999) mentions a test which points out that only 80 percent of the pupils understood what the teachers were saying in class when they were speaking English. This could be used as an indication that the respondents are right in this case. Most teachers use Swedish when it comes to grammar and when they want to emphasize important information such as homework or instructions. We believe that this can result in that pupils are being “spoilt” with the teacher speaking Swedish during class because the pupils know that they will get the information in Swedish anyway. There is subsequently no need to put down any effort in trying to use the target language. Even though the respondents have the same opinion; that speaking is the most important tool in learning a second language. This matter is also emphasized by Dysthe (2003, 2005) and Krashen (Krashen and Terell, 2000). Also Lpo 94 (Läroplanen för det obligatoriska skolväsendet 1994) states that communication is a very important matter when learning a language. A major factor that this is not being practiced in reality is that the pupils feel insecure according to the respondents. Krashen (Krashen and Terell 2000) discuss filters as obstacles that could affect pupils’ willingness to learn, these filters could be self confidence and anxiety. We believe that the teachers give the pupils an easy way out when it comes to speaking, and this problem could be reduced by using the target language a lot more than they do now. Krashen (Krashen and Terell 2000) points out the importance of being exposed of the target language when learning a language. Lpo 94 (Läroplanen för det obligatoriska skolväsendet 1994) mention different parts that teacher needs to develop such as communication and interaction in the target language, English. We think that Swedish should be used as the absolutely last resort when teaching English; there will always be students that are in need of more help and resources here Swedish can be useful in reaching required results.

When asking the question on how often the syllabuses, as Skolverket (2000) and Kim-Riviera (1999) mentions, is shown to the pupils we can spot differences in work experience and in the use of the goals. The newly educated teachers show and discuss the syllabus more often. They also put it on worksheets and exercises given to the students, while the more experienced teachers do not feel the need to show it more than once. The teachers with more work experience told us that they had the goals in mind when they planned their lessons, but this could lead to that the students will miss out on important information. All of them used Skolverket’s or depended on the Workbook. According to Tholin (2001) are pupils able to
create their own goals for a period but it seems that no of the respondents we interviewed used this method even Dysthe (2003, 2005) argues in this matter.

Dysthe (2005) believes that teachers have to give pupils more responsibility when it comes to choosing topics in discussions and also in demanding the conversation in the classroom. Our results show that all the teachers decided topics and also determed rule the conversation. Not because they want to be in charge but rather because of the pupils lack of responsibility. This forces the teachers to take action and take away responsibility from the pupils. Dysthe believes that pupils should learn by themselves and the teacher should only be a coach that helps them when it is essential. She also argues that if the pupils fail a task maybe it is too difficult and the level is too high for them. We do not believe the task is too difficult for the pupils because the teachers often let them talk about subjects of their own and do not correct them during their speaking. Krashen (Krashen and Terell, 2000) is convinced that if the students should acquire a language they must speak it. Here the teachers are trying to make the pupils talk without correcting them and given them an easy exercise just as Krashen (Krashen and Terell, 2000) would suggest. But still the pupils use their affective filter and many of them belong to the group who over use their monitors. There might be a hindrance which makes the pupils not willing to speak. Kugel (1993) writes about the importance of students becomes learners and teachers becomes coaches. If the students are able to monitor their own learning they will acquire more lasting and useful knowledge. The teachers have to dare to let go of their subject according to Kugel (1993) and help the pupils become learners without giving the all information. When a teacher is secure in its role as a teacher then that role can change. Helping the students as a coach leads to that the pupils will be able to become active learners.

Kim-Rivera (1999) writes that pupils are encouraged to talk English during lesson in Swedish schools. It seems like the interviewed teachers try to promote and give the students more responsibilities, but there seems to be issues concerning even in this matter. We believe that this is a difficult situation and it is hard to come up with a solution in this matter. We want our pupils to speak but the reality is that is not easy. According to our respondents the pupils are afraid of speaking and they do not feel secure. Therefore they think that it is too hard for them to speak during the lesson. Maybe the problem lies among the teachers, maybe the teachers have not tried the right technique yet. Most alarming is that all respondents think the pupils in general are insecure and have low self-confidence when it comes to speaking in the class room. The atmosphere and dynamics of a group is always important and affect their participants (Åberg 1994, Dysthe 2005, Eriksson and Tholin 1997). Even Krashen (Krashen and Terell 2000) is convinced that filter like anxiety and lack of self-confidence will prevent the pupils willingness of learning knowledge. Therefore we believe that it is important to practice more and make student aware of this problem which also Backlund (2000) mention in her study. We also believe that students nowadays are more exposed to English because the influences that computer, internet, music and movies have on the youth this is also something that Kim-Riviera (1999) and Krashen (Krashen and Terell 2000) discuss. Due to this change we should also change our way of planning and execute our lessons. Since students are more exposed to English we do not need to use that much reading and listening comprehension exercises in today’s school according to us we could use that time and use it where we need the most, in speaking.

9.1.2 Strong or weak speakers
All teachers say that they can tell which pupils are strong or weak speakers and the teacher always gives pupils the opportunities to show them their ability to speak. If the pupil is a
strong speaker it is very easy to work with them but what happens when a pupil refuses to speak in front of the class. The teachers often have oral presentations which the pupils should manage to carry out and we think this is a good idea to encourage their speaking skills. We agree with Krashen’s theory (Krashen and Terell 2000) about affective filter that this works well if the students have the confidence to speak with others and have no problems that others are watching them while speaking. But what will happen to others who do not have this confidence? They all could do their part of the presentation in front of the teacher in a room their classmates did not attend and they still got their grades.

We also believe that this of course is a good solution to try to encourage the pupils to speak and make them feel more secure and confident. However both Dysthe (2005) and Backlund (2000) point out a very important aspect in this matter and this is democracy. Their opinions are that if a person cannot speak or is not given the opportunity to convince others in a big group, this person will probably never argue during meetings about problems in the community. It will always be the strong speakers who will talk about their opinion and the weak ones will be forgotten. This is a very essential issue they had found in their theses and we think many pupils will develop a negative attitude toward speaking in public during their time in school. In spite of all this Dysthe (2003, 2005) was assure that communication was very essential for all social beings and therefore students should develop the speaking skills together with their friends in the class and not in a room with the teacher. Furthermore both Dysthe (2003, 2005) and Krashen (Krashen and Terell, 2000) argue that a person will learn to speak by speaking with others during lessons. If a student only listens to their friends speaking and does not take part of this they will not learn anything if they do not speak during the presentation. We believe the teachers only mean well when they give the pupils the opportunities to speak alone with the teacher in a room. Moreover this could also be a process in progression to speak in the future. According to Backlund (2000) a person must practice a lot as a solution of this problem and we agree with her and like to add the teachers’ explanation to this matter. The pupils with problems of speaking in public will get an opportunity of practice speaking in front of the teacher.

Many teachers let the pupils sit together in smaller groups and talk to each other and this is an excellent exercise to practice their oral skills. Still Gustav in Gamma school with only 15 or 16 pupils in each class thinks the pupils have problems with fear in the group and also peer pressure. There are a lot of pupils who feel ashamed of their speaking in a group as Lundgren (1979) writes. In spite of this the strong speakers expect that the weak ones try to speak as ones try to speak as much as possible. We are convinced if the pupils work in this way Dysthe (2003, 2005) theory socio cultural perspective will work. Krashens’ (Krashen and Terell, 2000) theory of input of information will also become a winner. The teachers also took part in the exercise and talked with all the groups one by one during the lesson as a coach as Dysthe (2003, 2005) describes. We agree with the teachers that this exercise will develop the pupils’ knowledge of speaking because all of them will talk, still somebody will talk in Swedish because they lack words. Like Eriksson and Tholin (1997) we also believe it is better for the development in knowledge that mistakes are allowed. Even Krashen (Krashen and Terell 2000) agrees that pupils must be allowed to make mistakes while they learn a new language.

9.1.3 The importance of voices
When it comes to how the pupils should use the opportunity to speak in the classroom it is often the exercises, in Workbook or handmade, that decides in what way they are going to talk about. None of the teachers thought it was a good idea to let the pupils talk at the same time but Dysthe (2005) is convinced that methods like discussions or conversations create
multiplicity of voices. She is also certain that pupils should not speak one at the time for the reason that this does not create a dialogue. The teachers are of the opinion that it is more practical if not all of the pupils speaks at the same time.

We are convinced that when we speak English we do not recognize our own or our friends voices. It is not the same as we speak Swedish and therefore we must learn to listen how others’ English voices sound. It is a new language and it is not wrong to make mistake as repetition. Eriksson and Tholin (1997) writes and even Krashen (Krashen and Terell 2000) are of the opinion that the pupils will succeed with the pronunciation in the end. We must allow everybody to talk out loud and even try to listen to each other in order to improve speaking. When we speak our mother language everyone around us know how we sound but when we should try to speak another language the situation became restricted and we do not recognize the same people we used to. We think is the same among the students, they must learn to listen to each other in a new way they are not used to.

There are respondents who think the pupils do not want to talk because they are afraid of speaking or do not have the self-confident but both Tholin (2001) and Hedge (2000) give examples for lessons when the pupils have the ability to succeed with speaking. In both of their studies the pupils decide what they want to do with their development and they take responsible for their own learning. Krashen (Krashen and Terell, 2000) and Dysthe (2003, 2005) think is important that the pupils co-operate with each other and we also agree with that point of view. We also think this could increase the pupils self-confident because they can choose team partners they feel secure with. Both Tholin (2001) and Hedge (2000) are convinced that the teachers should not serve the pupils with exercises and if the pupils instead have a communication with the teachers we too are convinced the method will benefit both the strong and weak speakers.

One problem seem to be that teachers blame the students for their lack of learning but Kugel (1993) is of the opinion that it is not the pupils fault if they do not succeed in learning. Instead he thinks many teachers are of the opinions that their pupils do not work or are not bright enough -there must be something wrong with the pupils not the lessons. The truth is that the teachers teach in a way so that the pupils do not learn as good as they should. But the teachers are never questioned. Krashen (Krashen and Terell, 2000) discusses about the affective filer and believe this is why pupils do not learn. We believe this difficult issue is not discussed in schools instead many pupils will get more help from schools with their learning, often in smaller groups and not with their classmates.

9.2 Discussion of procedure and method

We have investigated a certain number of people’s point of view and attitudes in a specific phenomenon, and for this purpose an interview was the best procedure. The interviews were conducted in Swedish since we did not want to risk losing important information. It gave the respondents the possibilities to speak freely. Using this procedure it enabled the respondents to correct misunderstandings and ask questions while performing the interviews. This is one of the reasons that makes interview a good choice for this study, another reason is our selection of participants. To use a questionnaire would not give us all the material we require. The teachers were positive and willing to help us execute the interviews and had no problem taking their time to and reflect upon the issue.
Lantz (1993) writes if you do not have experience of interviewing people there is always a risk that the interviewer’s thoughts will affect the answers. We are of the opinion that we have not influenced any answers because the respondents only spoke by themselves and we only asked the questions. But the questions though were made by us and are therefore influenced by us. There were some occasions when we have to clarify the questions when the teachers did not understand them.

In Alfa school Adrian, Anna and Abbe did not understand the question to estimate **How many minutes each pupil had the opportunity to speak during a lesson.** All of them thought it was difficult to give a correct answer. Upon this both Anna and Adrian had difficulties to explain **How they evaluated the goals to achieve.** Anna could not describe in details the question, **How often the pupils are allowed to rule a discussion in the classroom.**

In Beta school two teachers had an issue with a couple of the questions on how they were formulated. Beata and Berit had trouble with the following questions; **How often the pupils are allowed to rule a discussion in the classroom,** and **Who decided the topic of the discussion in the classroom and why?**

In Gamma school two teachers had problems with some questions. Gunilla did not understand what we meant with the question, **How often the pupils are allowed to rule a discussion in the classroom,** and even how she encourage them to speak. We explained more of our thoughts with the questions and after the explanations she understood and was able to get an answer. Gerd had another problem; she could not compare a class she educates today with a class she educated for five years ago since she had only been a teacher for one year. We solved this by comparing the class she had last year.

In the beginning our plan was to interview and after that observe the respondents in the classrooms but when we listened to the answers we thought that observations were unnecessary. We truly believe they have given us honest answers because all of them were not in the teachers favors. Several answers did not make them look good as teachers.

### 9.3 Didactic consequences

All of the teachers that we interviewed were positive about speaking English during lessons. This means that the teachers have the will to speak even if the time is an issue. In spite of this there will be some didactic consequences.

The curriculum states that the English subject should prepare the student for real life and of course their own futures. It is of great importance to let students speak as much as possible during English lessons. This will not happen with out effort and the pupils must have the opportunity to practice a lot in schools. Teachers will be a very important coach during their education and one of their tasks will be to encourage the pupils to speak. One way to succeed with this development is to use the pupils own interests and even pre knowledge in subject they are very fond of. Most of them like to watch movies, play computer games, chatting and even use Skype to talk with each other and by using these items the teacher will create the speaking skill into a positive attitude among the pupils. One aim for the teachers is to create a subject that is so interesting that the pupils develop a will to learn more.
Another aspect is to make the students to start speaking in lower grades, and not for the first
time in grade seven. Many students do not like to speak in public and would rather be quite in
a crowd. Not to feel secure in a group is a big dilemma and especially for a teenager. Being a
teenager is a sensitive time and teachers must consider this. It is very important for a coach or
a mentor in a class to work with exercises which make the students collaborate more with
each other, tasks that will help the pupils increase their self-confidence.

One important consequence is the number of pupils in the class or in the group which is going
to cooperate during the lessons. Too many pupils in a class will not get the teachers attention
and pupils may easily disappear in the classroom. Not to correct the pupils when they speak
will make them feel more secure together in a classroom. The goal must be to speak English
the whole time without using the pupils’ mother language.

We think it is important that teachers become aware of why they choose to work with
different exercises, and the teachers assume from the knowledge the pupils should acquire in a
special way of working. If all teachers could develop their didactical subject theory we are
convinced that soon all pupils will have the multiplicity of voices in the classroom who
Dysthe (2005) writes about.

The teachers have the power in classrooms and they know the most facts and information
about a special subject. Pupils ask them if they have the right or wrong answers. So has it
always been in schools. If the methods those teachers use in schools would change from the
teachers’ powerful lessons into pupils’ lessons with opportunities to take charge over their
exercises and willingness to learn from their own interests. Then the balance of power in the
classrooms should move from the teachers’ teaching to the pupils’ learning. This method is
not an easy thing to change in schools but syllabus is clear on that point. The student must
actively take part in many goals to succeed with different levels’ of grades.

One of the most important consequences we found in our study was increased democracy.
There will be a selection of strong or weak speakers during the pupils’ time in school and
many of the weak speakers will never take part in discussions in their future communities.
This is of course a threat to ideas where everybody has a chance to say their opinions in a
certain matter. It is in school the pupils should learn rules about this important matter and
therefore the teachers must let the weak speakers have a lot of time to practice this important
issue – speaking in front of their classmates. It is very good if the teachers will let the pupils
talk only in front of them and not in front of the others in class but the main goal must be to
talk in front of a crowd. If the students only listen to their friends, they will learn to listen and
nothing more and this is not enough. The pupils must learn to argue for their sakes even if
everybody thinks the idea is bad. They must even learn to listen to others’ opinions and
consider all facts before they will reach a conclusion.

Further more you could discuss about how universities education in pedagogic is taught. Most
of the teachers seemed to agree about that it is the children fault that they do not want to speak
in class and that they do not take responsibilities for their learning. But this responsibility
should be the teachers and not on the students. When, why and where do teachers start to
forget this. Could this be a consequent from how the teacher education is planned and carried
out? Our education has been all about speaking and learning English but not much about how
you should do to work with this in class. With other words you get a lot of facts but no
guideline about how you should teach it and how you establish an atmosphere in class that is
suitable for different kind of learning. This is something that you have to learn or develop by
yourself. And we believe that it is possible to do so but with more help from the education could develop teachers’ ability more which would probably favour the students in the long run. Maybe we as teachers are not given the right knowledge to become a teacher that could manage teaching with the syllabuses and curriculum’s as our guideline.

**9.4 Further research**

We would like to see further research in this area we have written about. We found it hard to find relevant studies concerning this matter. Speaking is a relevant issue in our school today and we feel that it is of importance to make student of today to speak even more than they do. One suggestion would be to find out what the students think about their situation in school when it comes to speaking in the classroom. What do they think about their teachers’ methods of teaching English and what do they think about their own ability to speak a second language. Is it possible to unite the teacher visions with the students’ wishes? To bring the students everyday life closer to school, computer games and Internet, to use the resources there is.

Another issue that could be interesting to investigate is what qualifications employers look for when they hire new staff. Are they looking for someone that can write correct grammatically or are they looking for someone with a good ability to speak and communicate with others? Do the materials that are available in school now need to be readjusted to fit the demands of the labour market?

A third matter to investigate is the lack of project funded by the EU. Is there money to collect to develop the pupils’ oral ability? One way could be by funded trips to Great Britain in order to increase the pupils’ communicative ability and their vocabulary. It will create a greater awareness for the English speaking world in the meeting with a different culture and hopefully lead to desire to learn more and continue working.

**9.5 Thanks to**

Finally we want to thank everybody who has in some way helped us and made this study possible to implement. First we want to thank all the teachers who took their valuable time to let us interview them Furthermore we really want to thank all persons who had been kind to pre read all the material and give us helpful points of views. Last we want to thank our lovely families for being there and supporting us through the whole time even if we sometimes not have been very social.
10. References.


**10.1 Electronic**


11. Appendix

11.1 Appendix Number 1. Interview questions/Intervjufrågor.

Hur länge har du varit lärare?
Varför blev du lärare?
Varför blev du engelsklärare? Kunde redan språket.

Verktyg?
Om du jämför dagens elevers språkkunskap med de elever hade för fem år sedan, vad skulle du säga?
Hur har du förändrat din undervisning med tanke på deras kunskaper, och i så fall på vilket sätt?
Arbetar du med textbook och workbook, motivera
Vill du berätta hur du tänker när du planerar dina lektioner? Hur stor är din frihet att planera dina lektioner?
När du låter dina elever prata, hur många minuter per elev tror du att de får prata? Hur stor del av lektionen går åt till att tala/skriva? Vad får störst utrymme?
Vilket anser du är det viktigaste, det skrivna eller det talande språket, motivera
Vad i språket anser du vara viktigast att eleven lär sig?
Vilket/Vilka språk använder du under lektionen? Varför?
Hur viktigt anser du det är att eleverna pratar engelska under lektionen?
Anser du att man kan använda det svenska språket vid något tillfälle? Vilket?
Hur ofta får eleverna ”styra” diskussionen i klassrummet? Hur uppmuntras deras tal?
Om det ska pratas i klassrummet vem bestämmer ämnet? Varför?
Pratar alla på en gång eller är det oftast en och en som pratar med dig som lärare?
Kan du som lärare se vilka elever som är de starkaste talarna? Får de som är svaga tillfälle att yttra sig?
Hur ofta jobbar ni med olika engelska dialekter?

Mål
Hur ofta planerar du efter kursplanens uppnående mål?
Vet eleverna om dessa mål?
Hur ofta visas betygskriterierna?
Hur utvärderar du de uppställda målen?
11.2 Appendix Number 2. Quotes from the answers / Citat från svaren.

Quote 1
For several of students this could be their only chance to speak English. Adrian quote 1

För många av eleverna är det deras enda tillfälle att tala Engelska. Adrian citat 1

Quote 2
I speak Swedish when I talk about grammar. It is important that all students understand what I am talking about. Bodil quote 2

Jag använder svenska när jag pratar Grammatik, då är det viktigt att alla förstår vad jag säger. Bodil citat 2

Quote 3
I use only English; it is never ok to use Swedish in class. The only time it could be ok to speak Swedish is when we talk about grammar. Algot quote 3

Jag använder mig bara av Engelska det är aldrig okej att andvända svenska i klassrummet, den enda gången det är okej att använda svenska skulle vara kring grammatik. Algot citat 3

Quote 4
We have decided that we should speak English and only English in our classrooms. But it is impossible to implement. Suddenly a student starts to speak Swedish with me and I with out even thinking I reply in Swedish. It is unnatural for Swedish people, in a Swedish classroom to speak English. Gunilla, quote 4


Quote 5
Speaking English is the most important of the tools, unfortunately I do not think I succeed as well I want to. This is due to that students are afraid to speak and that they feel insecure about making mistakes. This is very important for the youths today. Gustav, quote 5

Att prata engelska är det viktigaste av verktygen, tyvärr tror jag att jag inte lyckas så bra som jag vill. Detta beror på att eleverna är rädda att prata och att de känner sig osäkra på att göra fel. Det är mycket viktigt för de unga idag. Gustav, citat 5

Quote 6
Speaking is the most importance because they are going to come in contact with it more than writing. One of few opportunities that will lead to writing in English will probably be if that get a job with that kind of tasks. Anna, quote 6
Att prata är det viktigare eftersom de kommer i kontakt med det oftare än att skriva. Ett av de få tillfällen som kommer att leda till att skriva engelska kommer troligen att vara om de får ett arbete med den sortens uppgifter. Anna, citat 6

Quote 7
To speak, then they can make themselves understood and communicate with others. Bodil, quote 7

Att prata, sen kan de göra sig förstådda och kommunisera med andra. Bodil, citat 7

Quote 8
It is important that they speak as much as possible during class. Gustav, quote 8

Det är viktigt att de pratar så mycket som möjligt under lektionen. Gustav, citat 8

Quote 9
If the students speak English during class they will maintain their language. Language is a continuous knowledge that needs to be updated." Beata quote 9

Om eleverna pratar engelska under lektionen kommer de att bebehålla sitt språk. Språket är ett kontinuerligt lärande som behöver bli uppdaterat. Beata, citat 9

Quote 10
It is vital that the students learn different parts of the language. But by speaking they will get a good start. It is also important that they understand spoken language. Input is of great significance according to me. Bodil, quote 10

Det är av betydelse att eleven lär sig olika bitar i språket. Men genom talet får de en bra start. Det är även viktigt att de förstår talad engelska. Input är av största betydelse ensligt mig. Bodil, citat 10

Quote 11
I wish that we were speaking more but as it turns out writing and listening gets most of the time”. Bodil quote 11

Jag önskar att vi pratar mera men det visar sig att skriva och lyssa får den mesta av tiden. Bodil citat 11

Quote 12
At the moment it is writing which will get the most time in the lesson. This is because of the reason that the pupils do not want to speak English at all. It is important that the pupils must feel secure in the classroom situation so that they want to speak. Beata, quote 12

För tillfället är det skrivning som får det mesta av tiden under lektionen. Detta beror på den anledningen att eleverna inte alls vill prata engelska. Det är viktigt att eleverna känner sig säkra i klassrummet så de vill prata. Beata, citat 12

Quote 13
Not all of the students do feel secure in the classroom; therefore they speak one at the time. Even if we have a discussion in a group and they sit together and talk. Bodil, quote 13
Inte alla elever känner sig säkra i klassrummet, därför pratar de en i taget. Även om vi har en gruppdiskussion och de sitter tillsammans och pratar. Bodil, citat 13

Quote 14
/… most of the pupils feel secure with writing and it is easier for them to work with that than to speak. / Abbe, quote 14

/… de flesta eleverna känner sig säkra med att skriva och det är lättare för dem att arbeta med det än att prata./ Abbe, citat 14

Quote 15
I presume that the textbook and workbook are constructed from the syllabuses and by using them I do not need to look at the syllabuses while planning lessons. Gerd, quote 15

Jag förutsätter att textboken och övningsboken är konstruerade med utgångspunkt från kursplanen och genom att använda dem behöver jag inte titta igenom kursplanen när jag planerar lektionerna. Gerd, citat 15

Quote 16
The awareness of the syllabus and the goals that the student need to attain by the ninth year increase among the students as longer the attend school. In year seven the goals are very simplified and then they are more detailed in year eight to prepare the students for all the goals in the ninth grade. Algot, quote 16

Kännedomen av kursplanen och målen som eleven behöver uppnå i nionde års klassen allt eftersom de går i skolan. I årskurs sju är målen förenklade och i år åtta mera detaljerad för att förbereda dem för alla mål i års klass nio. Algot, citat 16

Quote 17
Everybody will have the opportunities to say something. I often go around in the classroom and talk to each student, but I do not ask any difficult questions. My goal is to make them speak English. Strong speakers? I can see who wants to talk in front of a group, but I am not sure if they are the strongest. I am not sure. Beata, quote 17


Quote 18
I am convinced that everybody in Sweden think the youths are very good in speaking English, but I would say this is a myth. They are good in understanding the language but speaking is worse and this is because of the fear in the group and also the peer pressure. Gustav, quote 18

Jag är övertygad att alla i Sverige tror att ungdomar pratar mycket bra engelska, men jag skulle säga att det är en myt. De är bra på att förstå språket men att prata är det sämre med och detta beror på rädslan i gruppen men även grupptrycket. Gustav, citat 18
11.3 Appendix Number 3. Consent from Kilhström, S

Sv: Referenser...

Från: Sonja Kihlström (Sonja.Kihlstrom@hb.se)
Skickat: den 23 december 2008 11:44:15
Till: lisalonqvist@hotmail.com
Hej

Visst kan ni hänvisa till mig. I och med att ni har med Vetenskapsrådet så är det helt ok.

Lycka till med examensarbetet och God Jul
Sonja

Sonja Kihlström
Högskolan i Borås

>>> Lisa Lönqvist <lisalonqvist@hotmail.com> 08-12-23 10:42 >>>

Hej Sonja!

Vi skulle vilja hänvisa till dig i vårt examensarbete och undrar om det går bra?
Vi har inte citerat dig men vi har hänvisat till din föreläsning under AUO3 vt 08.
Om du misstycker var vänlig hör av dig till oss igen. Vi är tacksamma för svar!

MVH Lisa Lönqvist, Daniel Ask och Solveig Ivarsson

Texten det gäller är följande;

6. Ethics
6.1 Ethical standpoint
According to Kihlström[1] it is important to follow ethical principles when we carry out research. In interviews we deal with the ethic between us as interviewers and the respondents who will answer the questions. To do this we followed Vetenskapsrådet’s (2002) ethical principles of research and refer to the following four main demands/ rules: