Communication or separation?

The Role of Grammar in grade 9 English teaching materials

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate how grammar is dealt with in teaching materials for grade 9 English and also to investigate how well adjusted the currently used teaching materials are to the new curriculum Lgr11. Three teaching materials from three different publishers are analysed, *Magic, Time* and *Wings.* The primary focus of the survey is if grammar is dealt with in the materials in a way which corresponds to today´s language research and if these materials will be useful also after the implementation of Lgr11.

The analysis shows that, to some extent, grammar is dealt with differently from other aspects of language learning and that this is not recommended by language researchers. It is also clearly shown that the teaching materials can be used together with Lgr11 if some adjustments are made. *Magic* is the book which would then require the most adjustments.

Keywords: Teaching materials English, Grammar, Lgr11

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1. Introduction

The studying of English in Swedish schools has been an issue for a very long time and in the study of a language several components are involved. One essential part is grammar and the teaching and learning of grammar has therefore a long tradition within the Swedish school system. There are different opinions, however, on which role grammar should play in the learning of a foreign language. Throughout history this has been debated thoroughly and the attitude towards this area of language learning is something that is well worth discussing.

As an English teacher to be I will soon face the reality of teaching and meeting students for real for the first time. This is something which I believe cannot be compared to what you experience as a teacher trainee or even as a substitute teacher. In my future career as a language teacher I estimate the teaching of grammar to be a relatively sensitive topic since my experience of how this is received by students is that it is not the most popular area in language learning. Malmberg et al (2000:16), who initiated the so called STRIMS – project, for example mentions that grammar is the area in which most students perceive difficulties when it comes to foreign language learning. On the other hand, however, grammar is an important aspect of mastering a language. Nilsson, in *Retoriken i grammatiken* (2000:37f), discusses this issue and states that grammar helps us in discovering how a language is structured and therefore gives us the means to describe a language. He indicates that by studying grammar you learn how to really master a language, i.e. for example how to adapt your language to upcoming situations. I therefore find it interesting to investigate how grammar is taught in Swedish schools and the best way to do this, according to me, is to take a look at teaching materials used in schools at the moment.

The Swedish school system is currently going through a major change. The government has decided on the implementation of a new syllabus for the compulsory level, Lgr11, and when I start my working life in January 2012 this new curriculum has been in use for only one term. The teaching materials used in schools however, are not that new and most certainly they are adapted to the old curriculum. The question one might ask here is whether this might lead to problems in teaching and learning. I am therefore also interested in discovering how the introduction of a new syllabus goes hand in hand with the use of old teaching materials.

The new syllabus for English states that the knowledge and usage of correct grammar is an important part of the learning and mastering of English (www.skolverket.se) and therefore I find it to be of great relevance to investigate whether the teaching materials used in schools help students to achieve this or not.

1.1 Background

Traditional grammar teaching has its roots in Greek and Roman Latin linguistics and since Latin held a strong position at this time, grammar also acquired this status since the same methods for teaching was used (Nilsson 200:11).

When looking at the history of language teaching a clear distinction between grammar as a product and grammar as a process has been made and four different directions have dominated this area (Tornberg 2009:137ff). A short run-through of these directions is given below in order to provide the reader with a background to the language teaching of today. Also a short summary of how grammar is presented in the new syllabus for compulsory level English, Lgr11, will be given.

1.1.1 The Grammar-Translation Method

The first and also best known method where grammar was treated as a product is the grammar-translation-method which developed during the 19th century and was used up until the end of the 1940s. This method was reminiscent of the classical Latin and Greek education which is the base from which today´s language teaching emerged (Morgan & Neil 2001:2). The main focus of this method was the grammatical analysis of English and the teaching was mainly focused on talking about the actual language rather than using it. Teaching was conducted in the students´ mother tongue and rules were to be learnt first and after that applied through translation from the mother tongue to the target language. The primary source of language was literary texts which were translated and analysed grammatically and the students were often given isolated sentences which they were to translate (Tornberg 2009:34f). The form of the language was the interesting aspect according to supporters of this method and the usage of language as communication was not preferred. Oral and listening skills were therefore almost avoided completely (Morgan & Neil 2001:2). Grammatical forms should be learned first and by the studying of grammar a development of common sense would also be achieved (Nilsson 2000:13f).

This method is obviously viewed as enormously limited nowadays, but at the time it matched societal and educational expectations. The studying of classical languages was seen as contributing factor in the maintaining of the cultural heritage at this point. The students were boys and young men of the upper class and to them the classical education could be related to achieving high status in the society. The fact that most of the teaching was conducted in the mother tongue has a couple of explanations and a major one is the fact that

international relations at this time were extremely limited. The knowledge of speaking a foreign language was therefore obviously also limited, even within the teaching- staff. This was also one of the major arguments against the importance of the spoken language, even the teachers did not master it properly (Morgan & Neil 2001:2f).

Some elements of the grammar-translation method are still valid today however. The importance of giving students the opportunity to use their mother tongue when learning a foreign language is one aspect that is considered a great help to today´s students. It is also believed that the comparison between your mother tongue and the foreign language helps you understand how the new language is built up. The usage of translation could also be of help to students who are interested in the analytical side of language and should therefore be offered to them as a strategy for learning a language. This method, however, should mainly be offered to these particular students since many other students benefit more from other strategies (Tornberg 2009:34ff).

1.1.2 The Direct Method

At the beginning of the 20th century the direct method developed as a protest to the grammar translation method. This method was developed as a reaction against the neglect of the oral and listening aspects of language within the grammar-translation method (Morgan & Neil 2001:2). This was a more process-oriented method and the spokesmen for this form of teaching English argued that the actual usage of the language was the most important aspect (Nilsson 2000:16). The focus of this method was the target language and only this was used during the lessons. The direct method was an inductive method and within this teaching tradition, students themselves were told to discover and develop grammar and other language rules and use them. The grammatical analysis which was so important in the grammar-translation method was of lesser importance here and the language rules etc. were supposed to come to students unconsciously. As previously mentioned the oral and listening skills were emphasized within this method and the oral skills were mostly developed through the usage of questions and answers where the teachers asked and the students answered. The teaching of vocabulary was based on topics that were relevant to the students and this was taught with the help of demonstration and visual elements (Morgan & Neil 2001:2).

The focus in language teaching should be on the spoken forms rather than the formal language systems and therefore teachers needed to develop their oral skills. International

relations were still limited at this time and another way of attaining a common knowledge about foreign language was the establishment of a phonetic system.

This reform put much focus on the subconscious form of language learning and grammar should not be a part of the teaching among young students. When it was introduced it should be taught inductively, i.e. the children were to draw their own conclusions about grammar rules when reading texts.

Emphasis was also put on the fact that the teacher´s body language was of importance. Everything the teacher said should be combined with an active body language in order to involve surrounding objects in the teaching. No tasks regarding translation should be given to the students since this would encourage them to use their mother tongue and the teachers were supposed to talk to their students about how language learning happened.

The direct method was, as its name implies, based on the assumption that the mother tongue should be as little involved as possible in the teaching. The proponents of this method believed that the development of a foreign language was similar to the development of the mother tongue (Tornberg 2009:37ff).

1.1.3 The Audio-Lingual Method

Another method for language teaching was the Audio-Lingual method, which appeared in the U.S. during the Second World War, due to the fact that the need for military personnel with European language skills increased enormously. As understood, the focus for this method was oral skills and such aspects on language learning were far more emphasised than others, such as for example writing (Ericsson 1989:157f).

At this time there was also a development of technological aids and these were to some extent used by the followers of the method. The audio-lingual method was in much based on behaviorist learning theory which regarded language learning as a process of forming habits (Morgan & Neil 2001:3). The theorists believed that the learning of a foreign language was built up in the same way as all other learning and could therefore be explained by the same laws and principles (Tornberg2009:45f). The followers of this method therefore argued that language learning occurred through the formation of habits and the learning by heart and repetition were considered valuable aspects (Celce-Murcia 1991:459).

Language teaching that was conducted within the audio-lingual method was strictly guided and the usage of so-called pattern drills was frequent. This was when the students listened to a tape and repeated what they heard. One worked with small steps of progression where little

steps forward were to be taken, one after the other. In the end a satisfying language behaviour among the students was to be attained. No emphasis was put on the grammatical and linguistic analysis, instead the students were to be guided in order to avoid such problems. The risks of making linguistic mistakes were to be avoided (Tornberg 2009:46).

Thus, the teacher was to introduce language structures which the students should imitate and, in truly behavioural spirit, the students were given feedback in order to imprint the desired language behaviour on them for example the desired pronunciation. The correct utterance was then repeated by the students and new structures were presented to them. The mother tongue was seen as the main obstacle when obtaining a foreign language and therefore the differences between the target language and the mother tongue should be emphasized and practiced (Morgan & Neil 2001:3).

The development of this method led to the fact that modern languages, for the first time, were given a scientific basis and by that an increased status. Other sciences, such as psychology and sociology were used to explain how language learning occurred (Tornberg 2009:44). This led to the fact that many schools actually bought language laboratory equipment were the scientific aspects of language teaching were studied. This later led to criticism where the opponents were of the opinion that students who performed well in the laboratories could not adapt this knowledge to real-life situations (Morgan & Neil 2001:3).

Another aspect of this method was that people from lower social classes, who had not earlier had the chance to study foreign languages were given that same chance. This was mostly due to the need for military personnel with language skills but organizations such as the UN also contributed to an increased need to communicate globally (Tornberg 2009:44). The audio-lingual method separated itself from the earlier methods since they were more focused on a societal upper class and even though it has been under a lot of criticism it has still contributed with aspects of language teaching that are still valid. It has helped language teachers to structure their teaching and also established the four language skills ´listening´, ´speaking´, ´writing´ and ´reading´ (Tornberg 2009:47).

1.1.4 The Communicative Approach
A paradigm shift followed the audio –lingual method and this was characterized by improved communication. A clear sign of this was the development of the European Community which led to an increased communication between countries. Travelling also increased during this time and this, together with other factors, resulted in developed research regarding language

and what principles should affect language education. The communicative approach to language teaching which developed at this time had its roots in several different disciplines such as sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and general linguistics (Morgan & Neil 2001:4ff).

During the 1970s this method broke through and a worldwide shift in language teaching was seen. The emphasis in the communicative method was on communication itself. This model had a huge effect on teachers and became for the 20th century what the grammar-translation method had been for the 19th. The starting point for this method was that the student should develop a communicative competence rather than a linguistic one and that the language should be used socially rather than mentally. The ultimate goal was that the learner should be able to use the language in an appropriate way and therefore the grammatical analysis and creation of habits from the earlier methods were set aside. In syllabi the communicative behaviour of native speakers were used in order to incorporate sufficient language functions into the students. These could for example be as simple as ´expressing point of time` or ´persuading someone to do something´. The studying of grammar changed in the way that the learning of grammatical structures was not the important thing, but rather to learn the communicative function of grammar. The students were supposed to be able to use grammar for a purpose rather than simply learning formal rules and structures.

Classroom teaching was to be based on communication and therefore techniques that helped the students communicate with each other developed. Communication and language learning was, and is still, seen as a process rather than static elements such as functions and notions. Therefore modern syllabi, adapted to this method, are supposed to be designed around the tasks and processes that students use in the classroom when they communicate in a foreign language (Cook 2008:248).

1.1.5 Lgr 11
With the new syllabus for English, Lgr11, the government wants to concretize and elucidate the demands on students. Their intention is that teachers and students, as well as parents, are to understand what is expected from the lessons. Teaching is to be structured and led by proficient teachers and the main aim is to upgrade the teacher´s role and the teaching as such (regeringen.se).

The aim of this essay is given in the next section but in order to give the reader a background to that, a short summary of interesting aspects within the new syllabus is also given here.

In Lgr11 for English, it is clearly stated that language is the main tool for communication and that linguistic knowledge in English will increase the individual´s possibilities to establish international relations both by studying and working. Through the teaching of English the students are to be given opportunities to develop an all-round ability to communicate and this includes for example both spoken and written communication as well as the ability to adapt the language to different situations.

When looking at the specific content for seventh to ninth-grade English, some aspects on grammar is mentioned. This section in the new syllabus is called `central content` and in this part it is clearly stated what the students are to be provided with in school. In this section, all the aspects of English is dealt with but here I will only mention aspects concerned with grammar.

The students are to be taught grammatical structures, i.e. how to build up grammatically correct sentences, and how to be able to use words to create these structures and linguistic units. There is also a desire in the syllabus to develop the student´s linguistic competence in the way of communication. The grammatical structures will also be of help in the student´s communication since this will provide confidence in using English and make the student comfortable and able to adapt to different upcoming situations (skolverket.se).

1.2 Aim and scope

The aim of this essay is to investigate how grammar is dealt with in teaching materials for grade 9 English and also to investigate how well adjusted the currently used teaching materials are to the new curriculum Lgr11. The questions used to reach this aim are:

- How is grammar presented in teaching materials for grade 9?

- What types of exercises are used and do they follow the recommendation of present language research?

- Can the old teaching materials be used with the new syllabus when it comes to grammar teaching?

In Swedish schools a number of different teaching materials are used for 9th grade English and there are surely pros and cons with each and every one used. In a study like this it would obviously then be ideal to take a look at all of them but such ambitions are well beyond the

scope of this particular essay. This essay is, therefore, limited to the study and analysis of three teaching materials which will be further described in the next section.

1.3 Material and Method

In this essay, three different teaching materials for 9th grade English have been analysed; *Wings*, *Magic* and *Time*. The choice of 9th grade materials is based on the fact that this is the last year of compulsory level in the Swedish school system and students should therefore have been offered equivalent teaching of English throughout these years. It is interesting then to see what kind of grammar different teaching materials offer to students who, at least, should be at about the same level when it comes to knowledge regarding the English language.

The selection of these three particular books was made since they come from three major publishers. *Wings* is published by Natur och Kultur, *Magic* by Studentlitteratur and *Time* by Bonnier Utbildning. Esaiasson et al. (2004:176) discuss so-called strategic selection when it comes to research and this is what has been executed in this study. The analysed material has been chosen with care and not by a coincidence. Since materials from these three publishers are widely used in Swedish schools the selection of them will, even though it is a small selection, give some opportunities to make generalizations about teaching materials in grade nine English. Esaiasson et al. (191) maintain, however, that the most satisfactory choice would be to investigate all relevant units of analysis in a survey like this and that would then include all the teaching materials used for grade nine English in Swedish schools. As mentioned in the previous section it is, however, not within the scope of this essay to analyse such a large selection and therefore it has been limited to the three materials used.

The three teaching materials used in this analysis all contain one textbook, one exercise book and also a teacher´s guide on how to use the material best, according to the writers. These teacher handbooks contain suggestions as to how lessons can be designed around the content of the textbooks and other ideas and hints for inspiration are also included here. Therefore it is of relevance to include these teacher´s guides in the study.

Lundahl (2009:53ff) maintains that all usage of teaching materials should be based on a materials evaluation and his method of analysis has inspired this survey. According to Lundahl a number of different factors need to be taken into consideration when evaluating teaching materials and those are also the cornerstone in this survey.

The first issue brought up by Lundahl is how the teaching material is adapted to the syllabus for the subject and if the material gives the students and teachers the opportunity to

work with the goals in the syllabus. This is something which fits well with the second question in the aim of this study, i.e. *Can the old teaching materials be used with the new syllabus when it comes to grammar teaching?* There is, however, an awareness that the teaching materials used in today´s school are adapted to the present syllabus but, even so, it is of interest to take a look at the materials in the light of the upcoming, new syllabus. Especially since it is highly probable that the materials used at present will also be used under the new syllabus.

Lundahl´s second question in the materials evaluation is how the material works in relation to the performed teaching and if it gives the teacher a scope to work with the books in a way he or she feels appropriate for the particular student or class. It is important to investigate whether the teaching materials used control the teacher or vice versa.

Lundahl finally brings up the issue of how well the teaching materials function in relation to the students. In his opinion, it is of great importance that the tasks given are of interest to the students since this increases their motivation. The tasks also need to be adapted so that they fit both students who work best individually and students who function better in groups.

 The two final issues described by Lundahl fit under the first question in this survey namely *How is grammar presented in teaching materials for grade 9?* and *What types of exercises are used and do they follow the recommendation of present language research?* These are therefore also taken into consideration in the analysis (Lundahl 2009:53ff).

Since three different teaching materials are used in this survey a comparison between them is inevitable. Stukat (2005:53f) brings up the concept of a comparative study where you compare different materials under the same category and take a look at what differences and similarities there are between them. This is also something which was attempted in this survey and the comparison concerns how grammar is dealt with and presented to the students.

1.4 Plan of Study

Chapter one consists of background information regarding the language teaching approaches from a historical perspective and also a short summary of the new syllabus for English, Lgr11. The focus of that summary is of the grammatical aspect of learning English. After this a section regarding aim and scope is presented followed by a description of the material and method used in this survey.

In chapter number two there is a presentation of previous research within this area. This chapter is supposed to give the reader an insight into how language teaching and grammar teaching is viewed from a scientific point of view.

Chapter three consists of a combined result and discussion section where the results of the survey are presented and discussed by the author.

Finally in chapter number four, a short summary of the result are presented together with a conclusive part where particular aspects on grammar teaching, i.e. pedagogical implications, are discussed.

2. Previous research

Tornberg (2009:15) discusses the learning process and according to her the most important factor for learning something is the individual him/herself. This is why teachers often feel that no matter how thorough one might be in the explanation of something, for example grammar, there are still students who do not understand anything of what you are saying.

According to Ellis (1994:471f) there are a number of individual learner variables that influence how a student understands the information given by a teacher or a book. These factors are for example age, sex and previous experience. The individual differences in learning brought up by Ellis are numerous and this only emphasizes the problem brought up by Tornberg.

Reid (1987:89ff) also deals with the individual aspect, and in his argumentation, visual learning is of great importance and must not be neglected by teachers. Tornberg (2009:18f) goes deeper into the matter of teaching grammar and she states another important aspect which needs to be taken into consideration by teachers. As a teacher you must be aware of the factors mentioned above in order to understand what frame of reference the students have for learning something. These frames are most certainly not similar to the teacher´s and there are also great individual differences between students. The STRIMS-project, effected by Malmberg et al (2000:16f), where students in Swedish compulsory and upper secondary school levels answered questions on their language learning in English and other modern languages, proves this point since it shows that students may have other ways of learning grammar than the traditional ones. Malmberg´s research is based on compulsory and upper secondary level but Larsson Ringqvist (2009:49) shows that the aspect of difficulties in learner´s – teacher´s expectations also go on to higher levels of study. She states that students find it difficult to transform knowledge about grammar to actual usage of grammar. Tornberg

(2009:82) is of the same opinion and she makes a distinction of ´declarative knowledge´, which means the knowledge about language rules etc. and ´procedural knowledge´ which is the actual usage of the language. According to Tornberg it is of utmost importance that teachers are aware of this problematic aspect for learners, especially when it comes to grammar learning.

In order to shed even more light upon this issue another distinction in language learning can be made, according to Tornberg, namely the distinction between ´learning´ and ´acquisition´. ´Learning´ here means the conscious knowledge about a language´s formal structure while ´acquisition´ is the unconscious intuitive knowledge about how to use the language. Krashen (1981:1f) is the best known advocate for this distinction and according to him language learning should be based on the acquisition, i.e. the communicative aspect of language, rather than the formal aspect, i.e. grammatical rules etc. Krashen (1981:1f) argues that language teaching requires meaningful interaction in the target language more than a focus on teaching form and structure. He states that the correction of errors and teaching of grammatical rules are irrelevant to language acquisition.

The fact that students show great individual differences when it comes to learning does not stop the fact that research has been made on what characterizes a ´good language learner`. Lightbown & Spada (1993:34f) give a number of factors which are important to possess in order to learn a language and according to the writers it is of great importance that you are both willing to guess and to make mistakes. According to Morgan and Neil (2001:150f) there are a number of learning strategies which are effective to students when learning a foreign language. The students should for example be given different opportunities to solve language problems and there should be a realization among them that the language learned should be used for communication and interaction. One important aspect for this development is the use of the target language since this increases the opportunities for the students to develop their communicative skills within this language.

There is also a discussion on whether to teach grammar deductively, i.e. giving the students grammatical rules in advance, or inductively, i.e. letting the students discover the rules by themselves. In the STRIMS – project Malmberg et al (2000:16ff) discuss this issue and he argues for, both on the basis of the students´ answers and other research, that a combination of these two methods is to be preferred.

The differences in learning, however, are important to consider when teaching and Dunn, Dunn and Treffinger (1992:68f) give examples that teachers should take into consideration

when planning and conducting lessons. The writers bring up several important aspects but the core of their reasoning is that the teaching should, as much as possible, be individually adapted. The aspect of individualization is something which Reid (1987:ff) emphasizes when he argues that there are a number of different ways in which students learn something; visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile learning.

Tornberg (2009:29) summarizes the theories on what characterizes the good language learner and her conclusion is that there are no simple or unambiguous answers. The individual differences shown by students are a challenge for each and every teacher no matter the subject. In language teaching, however, Tornberg states that the best help a student can receive is to be given a number of strategies for learning a language and from that find his or her way of learning. She also emphasizes the importance of metacognition which, according to her, gives the students means to develop since their awareness of how they learn and why they learn will increase.

One concept which has had significant influence on the teaching of modern languages in both Sweden and the rest of the world is communicative competence (Tornberg 2009:51). One person who brought up the concept of communicative competence was Chomsky (1965:3ff) who made a distinction between the learner´s intuitive knowledge of a language and the actual usage of the same language. Chomsky argued that humans have a natural capacity for learning a language which is passed on to us by heredity. Hymes (1972:53ff), on the other hand, found Chomsky´s view on communicative competence far too abstract and implemented therefore a more concrete view on this concept. According to Hymes communicative competence should also involve grammatical aspects of language learning in order to determine whether a language structure or utterance is correct. Lundahl (2009:117) also discusses communicative competence when it comes to mastering a language and one thing he brings up is the fact that this competence consists of three aspects: grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic competence. In grammatical competence several factors, such as pronunciation, vocabulary, word formation, syntax and morphology, are included.

In 2001 the Council of Europe published *Modern Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. A common framework of Reference.* and in this publication the focus for communicative language teaching was clearly stated. This framework stated the guidelines for how to create communicative language teaching and here it was also clearly said that communicative competence involves a number of different aspects such as for example sociocultural and intercultural knowledge (Council of Europe 2001:101ff).

In order to attain communicative competence a communicative atmosphere in the classroom needs to be created. Tornberg (2009:60ff) gives examples on how to achieve this atmosphere and according to her it is of great importance that the students are given tasks which force them to integrate and communicate with each other, often without interference from the teacher. In such discussions it is, however, essential that every student involved feels that his or her opinion matters and therefore what Dyshte (2001:309ff) calls ´polyphony´ needs to be achieved. This is when every individual´s opinion is being heard and valued by the group and, according to Dysthe, this in the long run leads to a development of knowledge within the group.

In this development of knowledge it is also of great importance to be aware of the existing culture in the classroom. Tornberg (2009:72) discusses the multicultural classroom and she analyses this phenomena from different angles. One view is the fact that students might come from different cultural backgrounds but Tornberg also views culture as a question of gender and hierarchical structures in the classroom. In the traditional form of classroom teaching the teacher is the person setting the agenda, making up rules and in the long run deciding the classroom culture. According to Tornberg it is essential to break up this structure and involve the students more in the pedagogical process. A dialogue between teacher and students is necessary to avoid a difference in expectations on what is to be taught in the classroom.

Chomsky´s view on communicative competence has been mentioned previously and he came up with the expression ´universal grammar´ which is a system of principles and rules that are found in all human languages (Cook & Newson 1996:1). Whether such a grammar exists or not has been debated thoroughly. Tornberg (2009:80) upholds that there is no simple answer to this question and that it might still influence students´ learning of grammar in today´s school. Tornberg (2009:137) goes on by discussing the teaching of grammar and according to her it is not preferable to teach grammar as a separate part of language since the students then might not be aware of the holistic approach to language learning. She continues by criticising both teachers and teaching materials for making this separation and by proposing that this is something which needs to be considered.

Tornberg (2009:138) describes the distinction between grammar as a product and grammar as a process that has been made over the years. This distinction affects the way grammar is taught in schools and if you view grammar as a product you focus on the formal aspect and it is thus important to be able to analyse the different parts of this system. The most significant aspect on the teaching of grammar within this approach is the knowledge about the

language rather than the actual usage of it. If grammar is viewed as a process however the focus of teaching is the ways in which you can use grammar. The practical usage of language and how grammar can help us in this usage is what is emphasised (Tornberg 2009:138). Batstone (1994:5f) goes deeper into this distinction and according to him a majority of teachers are most familiar with the product aspect of grammar and this makes their teaching static. He continues by mentioning that this view also affects the expectations that teachers have on teaching materials. They expect the grammar parts in the books to be divided up into sections that do not mess up the grammatical system. Nevertheless, Batstone states that the most important aspect of grammar is the process aspect since it enables students to use a language for communication. In his opinion, a mere knowledge of grammatical rules does not mean that you are a proficient language user since the means of communication is of the utmost importance to achieve this proficiency. Tornberg (2009:155f) emphasises the importance of using the language at the same time as you are learning it since this gives the students a context for what they are doing. The creation of context is something which, according to Tornberg, helps students in the learning of grammar since it gives them an understanding of why they should learn grammar and therefore also decreases their frustration over the sometimes complicated grammatical structures. Tornberg (160ff) continues by saying that teachers must allow students to be wrong and make mistakes in their language learning. Students making mistakes when it comes to grammar is actually, according to Tornberg, a necessity for the development of a language if the mistakes are handled and corrected in the appropriate way by the teacher. The correction of mistakes made by students must be of the kind that it motivates them to develop their language skills. Tornberg argues for the importance of motivating students since this gives them a feeling of influence and participation in their language learning process. When working with grammar in this way the students are more inclined to understand the holistic aspect of language and that grammar is a large part of this.

Hedge (2000:145) also argues for the importance of integrating grammar teaching in the communicative competence since grammar is of great importance when learning a language due to its close relationship with the learning of vocabulary. Grammar has been viewed differently over the years but Hedge establishes the importance of an integrated grammar teaching. Ellis (1997:52) discusses the importance of encouraging language learners so that they are able to communicate in a foreign language and also feel comfortable doing so. This is

the main aspect of communicative language teaching, according to him, and must not be held back by the striving for an exact grammatical correctness.

Morgan and Neil (2001:6f) believe that the development of this communicative teaching style has led to a number of improvements in teaching. When it comes to grammar teaching the main development, according to them, is the fact that grammar has become more involved in the communication in the classroom and has therefore been integrated rather than separated from other aspects of language teaching. Another aspect which is of the utmost importance when teaching a language according to Morgan and Neil (46) is progression. This is, in their opinion, the main element in language teaching and should therefore be included in every lesson. This does not mean that the students should produce new material each and every lesson but they should, however, at least show some form of development within the area.

Another aspect on the teaching of grammar is the fact that many of the students in a classroom come from different cultural backgrounds and that their mother tongue might be another than Swedish. Ohlander (2001:198ff) discusses this issue and argues for the importance of a multi-contrastive awareness among teachers and that students with another mother tongue are given the best grammar teaching in relation to their conditions. He does not mean that the grammar teaching should be in their mother tongue, but rather that there should be an awareness of the fact that the language they are most familiar with is not Swedish. This could lead to problems for them in their learning of another foreign language since the language system they are used to is not the same as the one upon which the teaching of English in Swedish schools is based.

The usage of the target language during language lessons is also an issue that is discussed among people within this area. Morgan and Neil (2001:148) argue for the importance of this usage since this leads to a development among the students in a number of areas such as vocabulary and also learning by doing. Another important aspect that comes with the usage of target language brought up by the writers is the fact that this improves the students´ ability to communicate in the target language and therefore it is well suited into the communicative approach.

In order to create an appropriate language learning situation the teaching materials used for teaching must also be adapted to the preferred teaching style. Cook (1998:9ff) discusses the issue of writing good coursebooks for language teaching and one major issue she brings up is the fact that the books are not very often created by actual teachers and therefore may not be best suited for teaching. It is to be said, though, that this might not be entirely true when it

comes to teaching materials in Sweden. Cook does, however, come up with some important aspects which need to be taken into consideration when writing coursebooks for language teaching. One factor is that the books should be based on the target language since this will enable students to attain the second language in an effective way. She continues by saying, however, that the coursebooks must not entirely separate the student´s first language from the foreign language which they are about to learn since the language system used in the student´s mother tongue could also be of help in the learning of a foreign language.

Another important aspect brought up by Cook is the fact that the coursebooks must be adapted so that they suit all of the individual students. This is not an easy task but the books should offer some alternative way of learning since this can differ in many respects among students. This could for example be tasks both suited for individual learning and others better suited for learning in groups.

When it comes to grammar, Cook argues for the importance of not bringing up core aspects of grammar in the coursebooks but rather attempt to involve grammatical aspects in communicative teaching. This will make the students comfortable with the foreign language and therefore also enable them to learn grammatical aspects properly. She states, however, that despite the huge impact of the communicative aspect on language teaching grammar is mostly taught merely as a core element in coursebooks (Cook 1998:9ff).

Cook finishes her survey on the writing of coursebooks with declaring one important aspect which also needs to be taken into consideration by publishers. The coursebooks must, to some extent, be authentic in order to keep up both teachers´ and students´ motivation and interest. The material in the books must be relatable to the persons using the books or else the appropriate learning will not be attained.

A modern study which has been accomplished within this area is Adrian Rodriguez *The Decline of Declension* (2009) which deals with the role of grammar in modern language textbooks. Rodriguez (2009:29f) studied the way in which grammar was taught in coursebooks from four modern languages, German, French, Spanish and English. His study focused entirely on explicit references to grammar and grammatical features in the textbooks and he examined the development from the classical Latin language teaching. Rodriguez´ analysis clearly showed that the language teaching of today deals with grammar in a less specified way than what has been the fact earlier. In modern coursebooks, the usage of grammatical terms was limited and restricted and the range of grammar was less extensive.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 How grammar is presented in the teaching materials

Both *Magic (*2007:3) and *Wings* (2010:3) start with a page called ´välkommen´ (welcome) where the structure of the book is presented. In this section grammar is presented as one of the aspects that are to be worked with in the book. In *Magic* this page comes only in the textbook while *Wings* presents this in both the text- and the workbook. *Time* (1998), however, does not provide such a presentation to the students but go straight into the contents of the different chapters in the book. The introductory page in both *Magic* and *Wings* is in Swedish and this goes hand in hand with Cook´s (1998:9ff) argumentation that even if the coursebooks should be based on the target language they should also contain elements of the students´ mother tongue since this provides a connection between the two languages. Even if *Time* does not contain a ´välkommen´ section, it states clearly, in the table of contents of the workbook (3), when grammar is to be worked with. Similarly *Magic* (3) and *Wings* (5) are clear in the presentation of grammar as one of the aspects of learning English.

The fact that grammar is so clearly presented as a separate part of the books is interesting from a scientific point of view. As mentioned in the introduction, the STRIMS-project by Malmberg et al (2000:16) shows that grammar is the area of language learning which creates the biggest problems for many students and therefore the clear pointing out of grammar in the books might create anxiety and pressure among some students. Tornberg (2009:51) do mention the concept of communicative competence as something which has had a significant influence on the teaching of modern languages and Lundahl´s (2009:117) three aspects are of great importance within the teaching of grammar. Grammar is, thus, an aspect which should definitely be involved in communicative teaching, following current research, and the clear differentiation made to grammar in the books is not something which contributes to such integration but rather separates grammar from other aspects of language learning. Cook´s (1998:9ff) proposition of not serving the students core aspects of grammar is also something which is not taken into consideration by the materials. The teaching materials in this survey, thus, present grammar in a way which might make it difficult for the students to learn grammatical aspects properly (Cook 1998:9ff) and according to Tornberg (2009:137) the separation of grammar is something which is a problem when it comes to teaching materials in general. The holistic aspect of learning a language is something which Tornberg feels might be lost when the teaching materials are built up this way.

Another aspect which is shared by all three of the analysed teaching materials is the fact that they each, either in the textbook or the workbook, contains a section where the basic grammatical rules are given. This section is quite large when it comes to number of pages and gives the students rules and examples of the basic English grammar. *Time* (95) even contains a review of the seventh and eight grade grammar. The grammatical sections mentioned are, in all of the materials, in Swedish and this could also be an example on the connection between the students´ mother tongue and target language that Cook (1998:9ff) argues for.

When it comes to where the grammatical exercises are placed in the books there are some minor differences between the materials but the core of where grammar is placed seems to be rather similar. *Magic* is the only book which presents grammar exercises in both the textbook and the workbook while such exercises are restricted to the workbook in *Wings* and *Time*. In all of the books, however, grammar exercises and examples are placed last in each chapter. The grammatical sections are clearly pointed out and grammatical terms are listed. In *Magic* the grammar sections which finish of each chapter are short, approximately one page, while they are a bit more extended in *Time* and even more detailed and developed in *Wings*. A more detailed description of the exercises etc. will be given in the next numbered section so therefore a restriction to the format is done here.

It has already been discussed that today´s language research implies that grammatical exercises should be integrated into other aspects of language learning and this is thus something which is not done in these materials. The grammar is placed last in the chapters and is clearly separated from the rest of the chapter. In *Magic* and *Wings* the grammatical exercises do not even deal with the same content as the texts they follow. One example of this is the first chapter of *Magic* (2007:14) where the grammatical exercise deals with irregular plurals. This exercise does not have any relation at all to the text worked with earlier during the chapter and this is something which is worth considering. According to Morgan and Neil (2001:46) the aspect of progression is of the utmost importance when learning a foreign language and this is something which could be questioned in both *Magic* but also in *Wings* since both of them share this structure. How could students experience progression when they are not only presented a new aspect of language (grammar) but also a totally different content? In this respect *Time* is more of the progressive manner since the grammar section, at least to some extent, deals with the same content as the rest of the chapter.

One thing which separates *Wings* from the other two books is the fact that it, at the beginning of each chapter (2010:81) states what the student will be given the opportunity to

learn from the following chapter and at the end of that same chapter (113) offers an evaluative part where the student can discuss his/her work and what has been learnt. This detailed run-through of what the students are to learn from each chapter is not anything that is to be found in *Magic o*r *Time* and this is interesting from the learner´s perspective. Both Tornberg´s (2009:15) and Ellis´ (1994:471f) discussion on the learning process states that the individual him/herself is the most important factor for learning and that misunderstandings between teachers and students rather often occur. The individual learner variables mentioned by Ellis (471f) creates difficulties when it comes to teachers giving information to their students and the evaluative part of the *Wings* book certainly makes it easier for both the students and the teacher to discover if there is a problem with this information. Both Malmberg´s (2000:16f) and Larsson Ringqvist´s (2009:49) discussion on how grammar is interpreted by students on different levels supports the evaluative part in the book. On the basis of their discussion this may help in minimizing the difference in expectations between the teacher and the student which, according to them, exists on all levels of teaching and learning.

3.2 Type of exercises used

When taking a closer look at the exercises used in the three materials there are some similarities but also a number of differences between them. *Magic* is different from the other two when it comes to layout. In this book pictures are often used in relation to the grammatical exercises while this is not the case in the other two books. According to the teacher´s guide (2007:9) the writers of *Magic* use pictures in order to make the exercises more easily accessible to the students. The usage of pictures in order to raise the students´ interest is something which is discussed by Cook (1998:9ff) and the importance of authenticity is stressed. It is necessary that the students are able to relate to their books and the usage of pictures when it comes to grammatical exercises might be a starting point for this. Reid (1987:89ff) stresses that visual learning is of great importance and the pictures used in *Magic* relate to this. Just for clarification it should be said that all of the three materials use a lot of pictures but *Magic* is the only one which does this in relation to grammar. *Wings,* however, uses another feature in order to appeal to the students. In grammatical exercises where words are missing these are replaced by smileys instead of the usual blanks and this could also be related to Cook´s discussion on the motivation and interest aspect. *Time* does not use any visual features in the grammar sections but rather focuses on the actual texts. One might argue

that this is something which could decrease the motivation among the students since the visual aspect is neglected. In Tornberg´s (2009:15) discussion of the learning process the most important factor is the individual him/herself and since the only thing offered by *Time* is the text the students are not offered any optional learning styles. This could mean that students who are more inclined to learn from the visual aspect brought up by Reid (1987:89ff) are not benefited.

As previously mentioned the exercises differ between the materials, both when it comes to layout, as is seen above, but also when it comes to structure and strategies used. To start off, it is interesting to see how the instructions in the grammar sections are given. *Magic* and *Time* both give instructions in English while the instructions in *Wings* are in Swedish. The usage of English in *Magic* is motivated in the teacher´s guide (2007:41) as an attempt of creating a monolingual classroom, and in *Time* (1998:20) it is emphasized that communication in the target language is of the utmost importance in order to increase the students´ linguistic competence. It is clearly stated that linguistic correctness is not always necessary but rather the will and confidence of communication is more important. This is something which corresponds to Krashen´s (1981:1f) thoughts on language acquisition and giving instructions for grammar exercises in English is one aspect of this. The frequent use of English in both *Magic* and *Time* is something which also might provide the students with a context for what they are doing (cf. Tornberg 2009:155f). Cook (1998:9ff) says, however, that even though the books should be based on the target language they should not be entirely separated from the students´ first language since the language systems of both languages might help in learning the target language. The usage of Swedish instructions in *Wings* could be interpreted as a means to creating such a connection.

When it comes to the communicative aspect, the teaching materials are both related to but also differ from it in certain aspects. Both *Time* and *Wings* are clearly adapted to the communicative approach when it comes to the presentation of grammatical exercises. Both of them contain several exercises where the students should work together and discuss among themselves to come up with rules etc. In the teacher´s guide for *Time* (1998:9ff), it is clearly stated that the students are to work as independently as possible and that they should discuss grammatical rules together before consulting the teacher. It is also said that communication itself is the important aspect rather that linguistic correctness. The teacher is also told to offer the students both inductive and deductive methods for learning grammar rules since this should be adapted to suit the individual students. When it comes to *Wings* the teacher´s guide

(2010:6ff) says that it is important that the students are given opportunities to work with grammar in different ways and on different levels. This aspect of discussion and reflection over grammatical rules is also given importance and therefore a number of the grammatical exercises are best done in pairs. It is, as in *Time*, emphasized that the students are given different methods for learning and that the teaching is to be adapted to the individuals.

In order to attain communicative competence, which both *Time* and *Wings* explicitly strive for, it is of great importance to create a communicative atmosphere in the classroom. It is then necessary that the students are given tasks which force them to integrate and communicate with each other (Tornberg, 2009:60ff). This is often best done even without interference from the teacher and this is, as mentioned earlier, exactly what the teacher´s guide of *Time* says. The aspect of discussion and communication is thus emphasised in both books and as Ellis´ (1997:52) argues for, the education of students who are comfortable in using the language is something which is then likely to be achieved.

The fact that the teacher´s guides for both of the two books bring up the issue that students should be offered different ways and strategies for learning grammar is something which has a lot of support in the previous research. Morgan and Neil (2001:150f), for example, argue that the offering of different strategies to solve language problems helps students realize the importance of communication and Tornberg (2009:29) goes on by saying that this is the best help a student can receive. Finally, Cook´s (1998:9ff) thoughts on adapting coursebooks to the individual student finds support the two books.

Magic is more restricted to individual work when it comes to grammar and this is worth discussing since many exercises in the book are meant for pairs of students or smaller groups. According to its teacher´s guide (2007:9ff) the aim of the grammatical exercises is to make them easily accessible and interesting to the students and to provide rules etc. that the students can use when learning. The fact that this is a book which focuses more on individual learning, when it comes to grammar, is not commented on more thoroughly. As previously mentioned the aspect of communication is what is emphasized in today´s teaching and the fact that *Magic* shows a lack of this aspect is rather strange, especially since it is a modern material in so many other respects.

3.3 Relation to new syllabus
The third and final aspect of this survey is the question if the old teaching materials can be used with the new syllabus when it comes to grammar teaching for the 9th grade. This is

obviously a delicate question since the new syllabus has not yet been implemented but still it is of interest for teachers to see if they can use their old materials even when the new rules are applied. The ideal thing would be, of course, for all of the schools in Sweden to get new coursebooks specially adapted to the new syllabus but this is not going to happen. The materials used today will still be used and therefore it is relevant to take a look at the relationship between the old materials and the new syllabus.

All three of the books analysed are fairly new and therefore they are supposed to share a modern view on language teaching. There is definitely older material used in schools, which will not be discussed here. The focus of the analysis has been on grammatical and communicative aspects in the new syllabus since this is what relates to the subject of this survey. Grammar is the main point, obviously, but how grammar can be applied to communication needs to be taken into consideration since this seems to be the core of modern language teaching.

When it comes to *Magic* the teacher´s guide argues for the importance of creating a monolingual classroom (2007:41) and this attempt is something which corresponds to the aim of the subject in the new syllabus Lgr11 which, among other thing, says that the students should be given the opportunity to develop an all-round communicative ability. In Lgr11 it is clearly stated that the students should understand both written and spoken English and also be able to express themselves when speaking and writing (www.skolverket.se). When it comes to grammar *Magic* provides the students with numerous grammatical structures and terms and this is something which is included in the central contents of Lgr11 for the 9th grade (www.skolverket.se). One thing that is very much emphasized in Lgr11 is the fact that the students should be able to communicate with each other in conversations and argumentations. This is something which *Magic* does not provide much in the grammatical sections of the book. These sections are different from other parts of the book in the way that they target individual work much more than the exercises for e.g. speaking and reading. The majority of the grammatical exercises in *Magic* are to be done individually and this does not agree with the new syllabus´ aim of communication. The fact that grammar is separated from the other areas of English in method of working is not preferred according to today´s language research (Hedge 2000.145).

When taking a closer look at *Wings* one can see that this book goes in the same direction as Lgr11 and this is for example shown in the way the grammar exercises are structured. Many of the exercises involve students discussing grammatical rules and coming up with solutions

for grammatical problems together. This definitely goes with the aim in Lgr11 for an all-round communicative ability and also with the central contents which emphasize discussion and argumentation. *Wings* also provides the students with grammatical structures and they are intended to write down grammatically correct sentences. This is also something which Lgr11 states as a part of the central contents. In this it is said that the students should be able to produce grammatically correct structures (www.skolverket.se). The fact that grammatical terms are often used and explained in *Wings* is also something which contributes to the usage of correct structure and thereby also to an all-round communicative ability.

In *Time,* there is also a use and explanation of grammatical terms which make both grammatical rules and structures clear to the students. As mentioned earlier, this is a part of the central contents of Lgr11 and therefore something which is worth using even as the new syllabus is implemented. When it comes to working with grammar, *Time* also provides the students with several exercises where they should work together. The majority of these exercises are to be worked with in pairs and this opens up for communication between the students which, as stated before, is something also in the aim of Lgr11. The fact that many of the exercises in *Time* give the students an opportunity to converse is in relation with the central contents of Lgr11 and this gives them the opportunity to practice both their communicative ability and also provides them with linguistic strategies. According to Lgr11 the developing of linguistic strategies is something which the students should practice since this helps them to engage in conversations and to express themselves in English (www.skolverket.se).

4. Summary and Conclusion

This study set out to examine in which way grammar is dealt with in teaching materials for grade 9 English and also how well adjusted these teaching materials are to the upcoming syllabus lgr11. The type of grammatical exercises used have been examined and related to present language research. The summary will be divided up into three different parts, each related to the subheadings in the result and discussion section and then finished off with a conclusive part where some pedagogical implications will be taken into consideration.

4.1 How grammar is presented in the teaching materials

The first question dealt with in this study was how grammar is presented in the three teaching materials *Magic, Time* and *Wings.* The result from the analysis shows that the examined teaching materials to a large extent do not deal with grammar in a way which corresponds to present language research. The most striking factor when analyzing these modern materials is the fact that their way of presenting grammatical exercises do not follow the recommendations from language researchers. Both Hedge (2000:145) and Tornberg (2009:137) argue for the importance of integrating grammar in the so called communicative language competence and also Cook (1998:9ff) states that the grammar should be involved in the communicative teaching. However this is exactly what is not done in the three examined teaching materials. All of them present grammar as a separate aspect of language and the exercises used are clearly pointed out as dealing exclusively with grammar. It is also interesting to see that the grammatical exercises in two of the teaching materials, *Magic* and *Wings* do not even deal with the same content as the rest of the text in that particular section. This is something which is worth noticing from a pedagogical point of view since one of the most important aspects of learning is progression (Morgan & Neil 2001:46). When grammar is so clearly separated and excluded from everything else the aspect of progression is clearly neglected. The grammatical exercises in *Time* does, however, deal with the same content as the rest of the section but in this book they are also separated and placed last in the chapter.

When it comes to the pedagogical aspect of learning a foreign language in general and in this case English it is clearly stated by several researchers that communication should be the main focus for language teachers and learners. On several occasions researchers argue for the importance of encouraging students to communicate in the foreign language. This also forces the teacher to work in order to create a communicative atmosphere in the classroom (Tornberg 2009:60ff). One could say, with the result from this study in mind, that the way in which grammar is presented in these teaching materials does not encourage communication when it comes to learning grammar since it excludes rather than includes grammar in the learning of a language.

4.2 Type of exercises used

The second thing examined in this study was what type of exercises that were used when it comes to grammar teaching. In the previous section, the teaching materials where criticised because of lack of communicative thinking when it comes to the presentation of grammatical

exercises. When looking at the exercises themselves one could see, however, that the aspect of communication is taken into consideration to a higher extent. Both *Time* and *Wings* contain several grammatical exercises where the students are supposed to work together and discuss among themselves in order to solve grammatical problems and come up with rules. In the teacher´s guide to *Time* it is, for example clearly said that the students are to work as independently as possible and discuss with each other before consulting the teacher. As mentioned earlier this discussion among the students helps in order to create the, ever so important, communicative atmosphere in the classroom (Tornberg 2009:60ff). From a pedagogical point of view the communication around the grammatical problems gives the students the opportunity to develop their confidence and provided that the discussions are in the target language the students are more likely to become confident and secure in their use of English (Ellis 1997:52).

Magic, however, provides a majority of individual grammatical exercises and this is well worth discussing since the present language research mainly focuses on the communicative aspect. The teacher´s guide to *Magic* does not provide an explanation to this phenomenon and this is surprising since many exercises in other areas in the book are to be executed in pairs or small groups. As a modern teaching material it is a bit unsatisfying that the grammar is not dealt with properly in *Magic*.

One thing that the writers of *Magic do* deserve credit for is the fact that they have designed the grammatical exercises in a way that might be more appealing to the students than *Time* and *Wings*. From a pedagogical point of view Cook (1998:9ff) states that it is extremely important with authenticity in the teaching materials since this will increase the students motivation and interest. The frequent use of pictures in *Magic* is something which corresponds to this idea.

4.3 Relation to new syllabus

The final aspect of this study was the question whether the analysed teaching materials could be used with the upcoming syllabus, Lgr11, or not. When looking at the three teaching materials it is clear that all of them share some features with Lgr11. Obviously, neither of the books will be adapted to a syllabus that has not yet been implemented but as stated earlier this is how these books will be used also after the implementation. As a result, it is interesting to examine which of the materials shares the most features with Lgr11 and therefore is best suited.

Magic is the one which seems to be the least suitable to work with in relation to Lgr11, at least when it comes to grammar. One thing, though, that corresponds is the fact that the writers of *Magic,* according to the teacher´s guide, strive for a monolingual classroom. This is in the aim of the subject in Lgr11 and here it is clearly stated that the students should be given opportunities to develop an all-round communicative ability (www.skolverket.se). The major issue which separates *Magic* from the new syllabus is the way in which the grammar exercises are to be dealt with. Communication is something which is very much emphasised in Lgr11 and since the grammar exercises in *Magic* are mostly individual this is not attained.

Time and *Wings* seem to be more related to the new syllabus when it comes to dealing with grammar since the majority of the grammatical exercises are to be executed in pairs. This helps in encouraging the utterly important communicative aspect of learning a language in a way that is both emphasised by language researchers and in the new syllabus.

In the so-called `central content` of Lgr11 it is stated that the students should be provided with grammatical terms and structures in order to enable them to produce correct grammatical structures (www.skolverket.se). This is something which all three materials provide and they are all rather similar in this respect.

4.4 Conclusion

As stated in at the beginning of this chapter, the aim of this essay was to investigate how grammar is dealt with in teaching materials for grade 9 English and also to investigate how well adjusted the currently used materials are to the new curriculum Lgr11. The questions used for reaching the aim were:

- How is grammar presented in teaching materials for grade 9?
- What types of exercises are used and do they follow the recommendations of present language research?
- Can the old teaching materials be used with the new syllabus when it comes to grammar teaching?

When looking back at the results of this study, a number of interesting aspects of English grammar teaching can be found.

Starting off with the first question regarding the presentation of grammar in the teaching materials one could see that this is something which is well worth discussing. The fact that mostly, if not all the time, grammar is presented separately from other activities in the books is something which goes against the recommendation of language researchers. The aspect of

communicative language teaching is something which is very much emphasised by the same researchers and in this an integration of grammar, into the rest of the English teaching is advocated. Why, then, is this not done in any of the teaching materials analysed? The answer to this is not easy to find. Neither of the teacher´s guides gives any explanation to this and this is a bit peculiar since all of them are modern materials frequently used in Swedish schools. Another aspect which is striking when it comes to grammar teaching is the fact that both *Magic* and *Wings* present grammatical exercises that do not even deal with the same content as the chapter which they belong to. From a learning point of view this is utterly strange since progression is a key factor in learning (Morgan & Neil 2001:46). The aspect of progression is very much absent to the students when they suddenly are to deal with not only a new aspect on language, grammar, but also a new content. This could definitely lead to an increase in anxiety among the students. As mentioned before, The STRIMS-project (Malmberg et al 2000:16) showed that grammar is the area in which most students perceive difficulties. As a teacher or writer of coursebooks the important goal must be to soothe this feeling and the way the books in this study are designed does not help.

Taking a closer look at the actual exercises used for teaching grammar there are both advantages and disadvantages to be found. The aspect of communication is stressed, by researchers, as something utterly important when it comes to language learning in general and therefore also in grammar learning. The materials in this study do actually, to some extent, provide the students with grammatical exercises that encourage communication. Both *Time* and *Magic* contain several exercises where the students are to work together in solving grammatical problems while the exercises in *Magic* are on a more individual basis. This is something which is not optimal from a learner´s perspective and it is peculiar since many of the other sections is *Magic* are to be done in pairs etc. In this respect, thus, *Magic* is a little behind the two other materials. The fact that *Magic* does present pictures in connection to almost all of the exercises is something which is to be credited though, since this could actually increase the students´ motivation and interest. All in all it is difficult to state which of the three materials provides the best grammatical exercises but it is safe to say that all of them could be even more developed.

When it comes to the relationship with the upcoming syllabus, Lgr11, it is also difficult to state which of the materials that is best suited. It is also not fair to expect a total harmony between books and syllabus since it has not yet even been implemented. Nevertheless, all of the materials share features with Lgr11 and this is something which is well worth

emphasising. One aspect which corresponds is, for example, that all of the materials provide the students with a number of grammatical terms and structures since this is something which is to be done according to the new syllabus. The aspect of communication is, however, also stressed in Lgr11 and here one could once again see that *Magic* falls a bit behind the other two due to the design of grammatical exercises. To sum up, the conclusion is that all of the books could be used together with the syllabus if some adjustments are made in the teaching and the book which would require the most adjustments is *Magic*. The adjustments mentioned must obviously be made by the particular teacher and adapted to the students with whom the teacher works. The aspect of individualisation is important, as stated several times, and it would be very difficult to come up with the exact adjustments necessary from a general perspective. However, one could argue that grammar needs to be dealt with in a way which involves rather than separates it from the other aspects of English. Maybe the teacher must not be strict in following the recommendations of the teaching materials but rather follow the researchers´ views. Obviously, this is far more complicated and time consuming but working with grammar in such a way will surely benefit both yourself as a teacher and most certainly your students.

This study set out to examine teaching materials for grade 9 English and there are obviously a large number of different materials out there. The three materials used here are definitely not enough data in order to draw any general conclusions but they do provide some interesting tendencies. Grammar has always been somewhat of an obstacle for students when learning a language and the reasons for this are several. This study attempted to go deeper into the actual teaching of grammar in school, in this case grade 9, and to see how well the teaching materials handle this issue. The answer is that there is no simple answer. It has been mentioned earlier that there are both advantages and disadvantages in the materials when it comes to grammar teaching. There is no simple conclusion how to decrease the, often experienced, anxiety among students (Malmberg et al 2000:16) when it comes to grammar but one could state that the aspect of communication is of the utmost importance since this enables the students to support each other in their difficulties. The materials in this study provide some communicative aspects when learning grammar but this could be even more developed. Communicative competence is something which will probably gain even more importance in the future as we become more and more mobile through e.g. technological advancements. The main object for students to learn a foreign language is not anymore to be able to read and write grammatically exact but rather to be able to communicate in a

satisfactory way. Therefore the teaching of grammar will most certainly be even more adapted to this way of teaching and as Cook (1998:9ff) discusses, the core aspects of grammar will not be as important in the future. There is no easy answer how this teaching will be done, though, but the communicative aspect is something which definitely needs to permeate also the grammatical part of language teaching. The teaching materials analysed in this study are all rather modern and most certainly there are no other materials used that are more developed. Nevertheless the way in which grammar is dealt with is not always as modern as one could expect and this is something which must be considered even further. That is, however, the objective for another study.

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