



World Wide English

An Evaluation of the First Teaching Material Developed After
the Introduction of Gy11's Criteria for the Initial Course in
English at Upper Secondary Level

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C-level paper, 15hec
Interdisciplinary Degree Project
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Date: 05/12/2011

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Abstract: A new curriculum was introduced in Sweden 2011, which increased the debate about education. The subject of English was exposed to minor changes; one example is that a criterion was introduced in the syllabus concerning the use of English as working language and another criterion demanding that students should benefit from the surrounding world as a source of contacts, information and learning not only as a source of comparison of different English speaking cultures as before.

The purpose of this essay is to evaluate the new teaching material *World Wide English*, i.e. the two textbooks *World Wide English Naturvetenskapsprogrammet* and *World Wide English Samhällsvetenskapsprogrammet*, to see what the main focus is in the material and how well it coheres with the new syllabus in *Gy11* for the initial course at upper secondary level, *English 5*. The method used in this essay is qualitative and comparative text analysis while investigating three textbooks, *World Wide English Naturvetenskapsprogrammet* and *Samhällsvetenskapsprogrammet* and *Solid Ground*, compared to the two most current syllabi in the Swedish school system (*Course Syllabus 2000* and *Gy11*).

The results showed that *WWE* includes several exercises to improve the personal writing abilities but fewer speaking exercises than *Solid Ground*. In order to develop versatile communicative ability, which is a goal in the syllabus, additional exercises concerning oral communication, need to be added. Furthermore, *WWE* seems to be a good material that coheres with *Gy11*'s criteria and tries to appeal to a target group interested in social science or natural science studies by choosing extracts relevant for each group.

Key words: Syllabus, Course Syllabus 2000, Gy11, textbook analysis, World Wide English, Solid Ground

1. Introduction and General Background

Education is a constantly ongoing topic for debate in politics, which is especially current this autumn, 2011, due to the introduction of the new curriculum for all levels in Swedish schools. Each curriculum is influenced by the current cognitive approach in society and further implemented in schools through Course Syllabus and rules that teachers have to adapt their teaching to. In the year 2010 the government of Sweden introduced a new school law containing a major shift, primarily, for upper secondary level. This shift made a division between the national programs preparing students for applying to higher education or a vocational degree.

English has been a compulsory subject in Swedish schools since 1962 and the current initial course called 'English 5', former English A, will continue to be a compulsory subject for all students at upper secondary level, while some students will, additionally, study English 6 and 7, former English B and C. Accordingly, all students do not need to study the same number of theoretical subjects in school (SFS, 2010:800 chapter 15 § 7).

As a teacher, it is extremely important that you are well aware of the syllabus for your subject since you are obliged to teach according to it. There is often quite much space to elaborate on the contents of your course but eventually it is the syllabus that presents the overall aim that you have to follow. Since all students you teach are exposed to the English language in so many different ways, language studies in school are of vital importance in order for them to develop abilities to structure and understand all impressions society and the Internet offer.

1.1 Purpose and plan of study

The purpose of this essay is to evaluate the new teaching material *World Wide English*, i.e. the two textbooks *World Wide English Naturvetenskapsprogrammet* and *World Wide English Samhällsvetenskaps-programmet*, to see what the main focus is in the material and how well it coheres with the new syllabus in *Gy11* for the initial course at upper secondary level, *English 5*. The material is constructed for students who are to apply for further education after graduation and it is divided into a version for natural science students and another, slightly different for social science students. Since *World Wide English (WWE)* is the first *Gy11*-certified material on the market it is interesting to investigate it closely in order to point out potential differences due to the new syllabus. Hence, to be able to reveal potential differences a comparison has to be made with another material designed according to the former syllabus, *Course Syllabus 2000*, named *Solid Ground*. Both materials are published by Bonnier, which is one of the major publishing companies for teaching aid materials in Sweden; moreover, *Solid Ground* is still approved to be used in class after the introduction of the new syllabus *Gy11*.¹

As a reader you have been introduced to the topic of the essay and will further on read a presentation of relevant previous research concerning curriculum and syllabi

¹ One must always have in mind that publishing companies which design teaching aid materials want schools to purchase their own material, exclusively. Hence, teachers need to outline a distinct approach to teaching and to critically analyze materials before using them in class with students.

along with the history of language didactics etc. in order to prepare for the investigation further on. Chapter 2: *Method and Material* explains the choice of contents and presents the primary sources for this study in order to make it clear for the reader what will be analysed in the result section, which is chapter three, *Results and Discussion*. In the third chapter, there will be one table and three figures provided and discussed according to theories of what constitute good teaching aid materials. Thereafter, chapter four, *Conclusion*, will summarise and present a reflection of the study's aim and questions, followed by chapter five, *Further Research* that suggests topics which have become visible through this study as a relevant field for further research.

1.2 Previous research

In this section, a presentation of relevant previous research concerning curriculum and syllabi in Sweden and Europe will be presented, as well as theories concerning teaching aid materials in foreign languages, language didactics in general and learner autonomy in particular.

1.2.1 Curriculum and syllabi

Per Malmberg has conducted an informative investigation of how curriculum, concerning foreign language learning, has developed in Sweden during thirty years in the twentieth century, from *lgf 65* to *lpf 94* and *Course Syllabus 2000*. A shift according to the overall aim concerning language teaching has been made, which has moved from grammar being superior to the practical usage of English as a tool for communication, due to an internationalization process in all areas in our society (Malmberg, 2001:17). When the syllabus for English was modified in the year 2000 the progression was made clearer between language education through secondary and upper secondary levels, with focus on coherence considering both structure and grades (Malmberg, 2001:20).

Furthermore, the syllabus from 2000 was constructed with great consideration to CET, *A Common European Framework*, which is a product of *The European*

Language Portfolio that aimed for a unified relation to the English language for all people in Europe (Andered, 2001:27). This framework was later revised to CEFR, *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*, and is still vital for language studies in Europe, primarily, to be able to compare language skills with one homogenous system, irrespective of geographical residence. A six-grade scale from basic to competent/proficient user has been invented by the Council of Europe, which is to be comparable with grades all over the continent, to make internationalization easier to achieve (Council of Europe, 2001). This six-grade scale was used to identify a student's strong and weak abilities in four different categories, such as *mediation*, *reception*, *production* and *interaction*. All four abilities are communicative in different ways, which is coherent with the common perception of communication being superior to, for example, grammar nowadays in the language teaching in Sweden. A common idea in the curriculum is that communication and speaking are interchangeable, but communicative skills can be performed in different ways and cover a broader variation than just speaking. Communication also takes place while reading a text or expressing a view through writing, but the main shift Malmberg emphasises is that according to the current syllabus in English, students are to practice their interaction with other persons more than writing grammatically correct.

Seven different steps were outlined when *Course Syllabus 2000* was constructed in order to create a coherent progression concerning language education in different grades. Step one to four was taught through elementary school and the initial course at upper secondary was called A, B, C (Malmberg, 2000). This caused confusion and when *Gyll* was introduced, it was decided to label the three courses at upper secondary as five, six, and seven, which created a clear and coherent progression according to terminology and formalities (Skolverket, 2010). *Subject syllabus for the subject of English* is the correct label for the syllabus of English in *Gyll*, henceforth, *Gyll* when referring to this syllabus and *Course Syllabus 2000* while referring to the former syllabus.

Petra Jäwert wrote a bachelor's essay in the autumn 2010 concerning the last two syllabi; *Course Syllabus 2000* and *Gyll* and their treatment of the subject of English. Jäwert aimed to clarify which cognitive approach that permeated the two syllabi; the overall result was that education needs to be modified and a rational

perspective within education is of vital importance in order for schools to be able to supply the level of knowledge that society nowadays requires (Jäwert, 2010:2). Moreover, the most distinguishing features Jäwert identified between English as a subject in *Course Syllabus 2000* and *Gy11* were:

- Teachers need to regain the initiative in education from the students, and the teaching should be more developed from a teacher's perspective of what students need to learn than the other way around.
- Crucial contents are re-introduced in the syllabus for English as a subject.
- Higher level of knowledge in English is to be demanded from students.
- Students must profit from their knowledge of English in everyday life, in society and in working life; hence, English studies in school need to be adapted to choice of educational program.
- Interdisciplinary teaching is to be preferred.

These differences need to be examined more thoroughly, in order to analyse any traces of it in the material chosen for this essay. Also, Jäwert has examined all three courses in English at upper secondary level in both *Course Syllabus 2000* and *Gy11* whereas this essay will only focus on the initial course in both syllabi.

1.2.2 Teaching aid materials

Teaching aid materials include a great variety of items, which require a specification in this study, particularly, textbooks. Surveys have been made on the frequency of the use of textbooks in class amongst teachers. One of them is written by Bo Lundahl (2009). Lundahl gives a review of The Swedish National Agency of Education's investigations concerning this topic and shows that three out of four teachers of the English language use textbooks almost every lesson (2009:50-53). Furthermore, teachers who have been working quite a long time, more than ten years in class, tend to use textbooks more frequently, than those with little working-experience. Lundahl emphasises a consequence that is interesting; even though three out of four teachers answered that they use textbooks almost every lesson, half of all the respondents in this survey say that they think textbooks have too much focus in class (ibid). Even though teaching aid materials in general are a good help to structure education, they

might prevent both students and teachers from using their creativity and cooperating in order to make a suitable course design (Lundahl, 2009).

Further on, Lundahl implies that if you are to use a textbook in class, it has to be analyzed according to curriculum and target group in order to outline its appropriateness (2009:53). Lundahl uses the three following questions while considering the appropriateness of a material:

- How well does the material cohere with the curriculum's approach to knowledge?
- How well does the material cohere with the teacher's pedagogical approach?
- How well does the material cohere with the specific group of students?

Textbook analysis can be much more detailed and complex but this model helps to structure the material and might be a usable tool for teachers, who are stressed, but still want to evaluate a new teaching aid material before using it in class.

Moreover, coherence between texts and exercises in teaching aid materials has not always been obvious since Michael P. Breen, Christopher Candlin and Alan Waters emphasised its importance through their research in 1979, which would not have been published if it were a matter of course in all teaching aid materials at that time. They argued that *content material*, which is the actual data and information and *process material*, the units or frameworks of activities need to cooperate in order to create a material that increases the level of proficiency among students (1979:4-6). The overall aim according to Breen et. al., is to make students encouraged to communicate in order to develop their own learning of language; therefore communicative materials, which can both activate the learner's competence in solving the problem of learning a new language but also offer more precise information on how successful learning is actually undertaken, are highly valued. Today, most materials have a clear connection between these two concepts and the main issue is instead how well it all appeals to and engages students.

1.2.3 Language didactics

While studying language it is interesting to look at investigations that have been made on didactics, which is the underlying causes and theories of teaching (Tornberg, 2009:11). Didactics is an old concept that existed in ancient Greek and was called *didaskein*, which meant to educate (Tornberg, 2009:10). In the 17th century the concept didactics was connected to education and explained in *Didactica Magna* through John Amos Comenius, which is acknowledged as the first elaborated theory of education (ibid.). One groundbreaking thesis was that a person could not take over knowledge from another individual; he or she has to create their own knowledge through reason and senses (ibid). George F. Kneller developed Comenius' statement by adding that knowledge can never be transmitted and that it can only be offered to students, which is an important point of view (Kneller, 1971:80).

Further on Tornberg refers to Vygotsky's theory of people being able to improve their knowledge through interaction and assistance from a person possessing greater knowledge, for example a teacher, which legitimizes the profession and still puts the teacher in a very important position in school (Tornberg, 2009:15). The *sociocultural approach* to education is well implemented in Swedish schools.² While teachers function as supervisors in the classrooms their own thoughts and interests will affect their teaching and interpreting, primarily, according to choice of areas and material but also according to their prior experiences. In order for students to benefit from this situation there needs to be mutual trust amongst both parties so that students can trust their teacher's interpretations as being wise and correct (Kneller 1971:81).

F.C Bartlett (quoted in Tornberg, 2009:16) stated another interesting aspect of knowledge when he declared that a person cannot remember anything that appears to him or her meaningless. If this declaration is correct, students need to be offered new areas of importance in modern education; otherwise they will not remember it after the course is finished. According to Bartlett, people choose and interpret new information from previous experiences, and these previous experiences he calls 'schedules' (quoted in Tornberg, 2009:17). These schedules organize and function as a person's inner model of reality, which does not always tie in with reality per se, and

² Sociocultural approach in this essay means that the development and learning process is, constantly, affected by the interaction with other people in school (Tornberg, 2009).

make it vital for the teacher to grasp his or her students' realities to be able to formulate new information in a meaningful way to improve their memorization according to Lund (quoted in Tornberg, 2009:17). Bartlett's theory is fairly controversial but it is interesting for the construction of textbooks, since there has been a clear selection of topics that, supposedly, will appeal to students as interesting and stimulating.

'It doesn't matter how carefully prepared a course design is, how much enthusiasm a teaching aid material is constructed with, or how pedagogically skilful a teacher presents his or her teaching; eventually, knowledge is always constructed within and between individuals through interpretation, processing and learning.'

(Translation mine, Tornberg 2009:15)

This quotation does not say that a good teacher, suitable material or a carefully prepared course design are meaningless. It only emphasises the importance of treating students with great respect since knowledge has to be created and processed in individuals and that which teachers teach and students learn are not always the same. A teacher cannot confide in a good textbook, he or she needs to be able to structure an education that goes beyond physical materials and activates students' communicative abilities in order for them to learn as much as possible.

1.2.4 Learner autonomy

The didactic concept, *learner autonomy*, implies that in order for a student to learn he or she has to be in charge of their own learning. Textbooks are more or less constructed according to this concept, which will be investigated further on in the result section. Due to this *learner autonomy*, Lundahl questions the overall aim for language teaching and summarizes it as "[t]he aim of language studies should be that students reach such high language proficiency and confidence that they manage to use the language on their own" (translation mine, Lundahl, 2009:99). According to Jan van Ek, independence and participation are the most important qualities for learning; hence, education in school needs to be framed from a communicative social structure to emphasize the coherence between teaching and learning (quoted in Tornberg, 2000: 217-218). Further on, van Ek argues that students not only need to learn how to best acquire new information. They have to participate in choice of material, such as

extracts and areas to treat in class in order to increase participation and commitment, which van Ek considers highly important (ibid.).

One critique that has been directed against *learner autonomy* is that, practically, content tends to be subordinated to structure in class, which might benefit students without problems taking responsibility, but not those who are in need of clear instructions (Tornberg, 2000:101). Another disadvantage with this concept that needs to be highlighted is that it may create passive teachers because of too much focus on independency for students. Teachers do not want to jeopardize their own or their students' roles; instead they distance themselves, which discourages students to use the assistance they might need to increase their learning abilities (Lundahl, 2009:99). A balance between instructions and independence is needed in order to create an environment that is positive for learning.

1.3 Aims

The aim of this essay is to evaluate the new teaching material *World Wide English*, i.e. the two textbooks *World Wide English Naturvetenskapsprogrammet* and *World Wide English Samhällsvetenskaps-programmet*, to see what the main focus is in the material and how well it coheres with the new syllabus in *Gyll* for the initial course at upper secondary level, *English 5*. More specifically, four questions will be investigated through this essay:

- Do *Gyll* and *World Wide English* cohere with each other?
- Are there any differences between *World Wide English* and *Solid Ground* in relation to *Gyll*?
- What kinds of activities are represented in the different textbooks and how are the materials constructed?
- Is *World Wide English* a good material to use with social science and natural science students?

2. Method and Material

This section will provide a description of how this study was performed, what method that was used and how, in order to facilitate reproduction of this study. A presentation of the primary sources, the two teaching materials *World Wide English* and *Solid Ground* is also included in this chapter.

2.1 Choice of method and material

The method that has been used is comparative text analysis whereas the comparison of both textbooks and syllabi was performed through qualitative analysis according to previous research (see section 1.2 and 1.3). Firstly, material for this study was selected which resulted in textbooks from *World Wide English* and *Solid Ground*. The reason why these two materials were chosen is because the former is unique since it is the first material produced for natural science and social science students and the latter, since it is a popular textbook in schools that is fairly new (Nilsson & Svedberg, 2003); moreover, both materials are constructed by the same publishing company (Bonnier) which affected the choice.

Secondly, critical reading of previous research and the two latest syllabi; *Course Syllabus 2000 - English A* (Skolverket, 2000) and *Gyll - Subject syllabus for the subject English 5* (Skolverket, 2010) was conducted and a table presenting the most crucial differences was made. *Gyll* has not been translated into English yet; therefore the Swedish versions of this syllabus was used and analysed in this essay. Furthermore, close reading of the two chosen teaching materials was done using theories by Tornberg, Lundahl, Bartlett, CEFR (Council of Europe) etc.

Further on, all exercises in the three textbooks were counted, followed by a categorisation into four groups: *speaking*, *writing*, *listening* and *other*, in order to structure the material according to its area of focus. The category *other* includes 'close test exercises' or 'finding the corresponding Swedish word', 'complete the sentence' etc. Some of the exercises in *other* might have fitted into *writing* as well, but a distinction was made and the category *writing* only contained running text in different range. Since the two books by *World Wide English* only has twenty chapters, the last chapter in *Solid Ground* was omitted (there are twenty-one in *Solid Ground*).

Results were structured and presented in pie charts (see figure 1-3). Further on, syllabi and material were analysed according to the four questions of the study.

2.1.2 Discussion of method

Qualitative analysis is used when specific parts of a material are interesting to investigate thoroughly. One can either systematize the material into categories or use critical reading as the main tool when studying the text; both critical reading and systematizing of the material have been used in this present study (Esaiasson, 2007:237). Why this method was chosen for this specific investigation was due to the reasonable amount of material that made it possible to look closely into specific parts of the text. Further on, comparative analysis was used since two teaching material and two syllabi was to be compared in order to find similarities and differences.

2.2 Presentation of materials

A brief description of all the textbooks, which are to be analyzed in this study, will be presented in this section. Since *World Wide English* is one teaching material that consists of two textbooks, both textbooks will be presented separately in this section, but referred to as one material when being analysed most of the time, and two different books if specific differences need to be clarified.

2.2.1 World Wide English *Naturvetenskapsprogrammet*

Christer Johansson, Kerstin Tuthill and Ulf Hörmander constructed this textbook in the year 2011 and it was published by Bonnier. It is a complete material (texts and exercises are combined in the same book) consisting of twenty chapters covering different subjects, grammar exercises, the phonetic alphabet and pronunciation description and vocabulary lists with Swedish translation plus maps and five texts labelled *EWV – English World Wide* which are extracts from different English speaking countries in order to widen the awareness of English as a global language. The introduction is written in English and gives a broad description of what students

can expect from their textbook. The last five chapters are natural science oriented and cover topics such as a sustainable usage of natural resources, the earth and solar system, math, water consumption around the world, recycling tips etc. A student's CD is also included with all texts as mp3-files at the back of the textbook.

There is only one teacher's guide for this material since the only differences between these two books, i.e. the natural science and the social science book, are the last five chapters in each book, but exercises are alike regardless of which book you use. The guide is written in Swedish. Each chapter has a *chapter check* available for the teacher to see if students understand the elements of the chapter, which can function as a small test. Major tests are included as well in the guide, whose structure is reminiscent of the national tests in order to prepare students for those finals. Grammar instructions are available in English for students a Swedish version is included as well in the teacher's guide that can be provided for those who need it.

2.2.2 World Wide English *Samhällsvetenskapsprogrammet*

The only differences from section 2.2.1 is that this book's introduction is written for social science students and the last five chapters in the book cover different subjects suitable for this target group. These topics are; the situation for young parents, different schools according to social variation, British law and order, the history of elections and finally a chapter about *Swedishness*.

2.2.3 Solid Ground: Engelska kurs A (steg 5)

This material is constructed by Fred Nilsson and Gunnar Svedberg and was first published in 2003 by Bonnier. The textbook consists of twenty-one chapters which are divided into three parts where the first is to introduce students to the new level of studies at upper secondary level; part two consists of twelve chapters categorized under *food*, *film* and *fear* and part three includes more difficult extracts of texts to challenge students to improve their language skills further. Instructions to the different exercises are given in Swedish and vocabulary lists include Swedish translations. Moreover, a web site that contains several additional exercises is

available for free, to help students practice their proficiency levels in different ways.³ Grammar, pronunciation, listening, individual and pair exercises alternate in each passage in the textbook. As for the introduction, the editors briefly explain the structure of the material in Swedish to make students and teachers aware of what they might expect.

The teacher's file includes more exercises to each chapter and suggested further readings as well as a guide for assessment and usage of the material and it is written in Swedish. Moreover it includes a checklist, which can be handed out to students in order for them to assess their own abilities and visualise what their strengths and weaknesses are to improve their proficiency level further.

3. Results and Discussion

To structure a comparison between syllabi and teaching materials the four main questions of this essay will function as sub-sections. Under each sub-section there will be an exposition of relevant material followed by a discussion.

3.1 Do *Gyll* and *World Wide English* cohere with each other?

In *Gyll* a description of the overall aim for English, as a subject in upper secondary schools is included, followed by a more specific description of central contents for *English 5*. The overall aim states that education should encourage students to use their language skills from their own experiences to increase the motivation for language studies; benefit from the rest of the world as a resource for contact with English speaking people and develop a cultural awareness of English speaking areas. A more specified description for *English 5*, which is divided into four different categories, namely, *mediation*, *reception*, *production* and *interaction* follow the overall aims for the subject taught in school. Each category includes specific examples of text types and topics that all students should have discussed during the initial course in English, *English 5*. More specifically, *mediation* requires that relevant topics for students

³ <http://www1.bonline.se/solidground/solidground1/>

should be covered and that different types of fiction should be represented during the course; *reception* is to include different variations of social and spoken English and strategies for critical reading of different text types, whereas *production* as well as *interaction* requires teaching about how formal and informal English differ and when it is appropriate to use each style in order to encourage students to develop the ability to attend discussions concerning different topics.

As for *World Wide English*, the first thing that becomes clear is the treatment of different varieties of English and the importance of cultural awareness. Cultural awareness is mentioned in *Course Syllabus 2000* as well but becomes more significant in *Gyll* since it is added that students ‘should benefit from the surrounding world as a resource for contacts, information and learning’ (see Table 1. ‘Global perspectives on English as a subject in school’ p. 15) which implies that students are supposed to expand their knowledge through using the surrounding world as a resource, not only learn from cultural differences.

Furthermore, syllabus *Gyll* clearly states that the subject of English is to develop a versatile communicative ability in each student (Skolverket, 2010) and that they should be able to use English in a functional way in vocational and daily life and for further studies (Lpf 94 2.1). Since the last five chapters in each textbook of *World Wide English* are adapted to appeal to social science or natural science students one can argue that the material coheres with this specific goal in the syllabus; on the other hand teachers are supposed to use more teaching’s aid materials than just textbooks in order to help students develop a versatile communicative ability, so even if a textbook lacks extracts appealing to the target group, teachers can add other fictional works to fulfil this goal with his or her students.

A comparison of the two most recent syllabi will be presented in Table 1 in order to visualise the differences and similarities in between, and to distinguish what has been added to and removed from *Gyll* during its construction.

Table 1. *Differences between the two syllabi Course Syllabus 2000 and Gy11*

Syllabi Crucial contents	<i>Course Syllabus 2000</i>	<i>Gy11</i>
Take responsible for their own learning.	The student takes responsibility for planning, fulfilling and evaluating his or her work by using appropriate tools.	Not mentioned in Gy11.
English as working language.	Not mentioned in Course Syllabus 2000.	Substantially, both teacher and students should use English as working language.
Strategies to solve language problems.	The student develops different strategies to solve language problems (written as a criterion for grades).	Written in overall aim.
Global perspectives on English as a subject in school.	The student should develop cultural, environmental and social awareness of English speaking areas and be able to compare different traditions.	The student should develop cultural, environmental and social awareness of English speaking areas. + Education should benefit from the surrounding world as a resource for contacts, information and learning.
Complementary sources for learning.	The student should read and understand easily accessed fiction, and through fiction acquire knowledge about cultural traditions in English speaking countries.	The teaching should include different types of fiction, both literature and film as well as other forms of media.
Personal improvement of texts and oral exercises.	Not mentioned in Course Syllabus 2000.	The student should be able to improve his or her own texts and oral extracts to clarify, define and vary choice of vocabulary etc. in order to structure and adapt the extract to the context.

This table illustrates and clarifies differences in crucial contents between the two syllabi. Besides similarities it can be said that *Gyll* is more specific in what a course should contain, one example would be that *Course Syllabus 2000* states: ‘students shall read and understand easily accessed fiction’ whereas the same goal in *Gyll* follows: ‘the teaching should include different types of fiction, both literature and film as well as other forms of media’ (see Table 1 ‘Complementary sources for learning’). *Course Syllabus 2000* has more general expressions of the goals than *Gyll*.

Both syllabi are inspired by CEFR (see section 1.2.1) which becomes even clearer in *Gyll* since it mentions the four categories named after the same abilities included in CEFR.⁴ Even new labels were given on the courses to make this connection to CERF more visible when introducing *Gyll* (see section 1). According to syllabus *Gyll* the aim of students being able to profit from their knowledge of English in everyday life, in society and in working life is emphasised (see section 1.2.1, Jäwert), which implies that teaching needs to be adapted to student’s interests even more according to the new syllabus. By investigating *WWE* it has been clear that the authors of this particular teaching material try to fulfil this goal that has been clearly emphasised in the new syllabus.

Another observation that has been made is the requirement of using English as working language in all courses due to *Gyll* (Table 1, ‘English as working language’). Without doubt, teachers used English as working language before *Gyll* was introduced as well, but it was not written in the syllabus for the initial course before, as it is now, which should help to improve students oral communicative ability even more. In the teaching material *WWE* the grammar instructions are provided in English, which might be due to this goal in the syllabus since it helps teachers and students to discuss and expand their of English as working language during class.

⁴ A survey conducted by the Swedish National Agency of Education emphasizes syllabus *Gyll* to be even more homogenous with CEFR than *Course Syllabus 2000* (Skolverket 2011), which is to be expected since there is a strive for a European standard when it comes to education and language proficiency.

3.2 Are there any differences between *World Wide English* and *Solid Ground* in relation to *Gyll*?

In *World Wide English* and *Solid Ground* there are exercises for both individuals and pairs to alternate and find different ways of approaching specific texts. As Kneller states (1971), knowledge is offered to the students through these textbooks but if it is to become clear and remembered they have to make an effort and take responsibility for their own learning since teachers can only help students, not force them to understand and develop knowledge. In order for students to take responsibility for their own learning a climate of *learner autonomy* and mutual trust (Kneller, 1971) has to exist, since high proficiency requires hard work and students are to decide this workload themselves. If this trust does not exist, the teacher has to, constantly, convince the class that what he or she says and knows is true, or at least wise and correct interpretations of true fact. When mutual trust, personal responsibility and interesting theory exist, a good climate for learning permeates the classroom, for most students. A teacher, therefore, needs to strive for this atmosphere to exist in order for his or her students to gain as much as possible from their education, and both *WWE* and *Solid Ground* share the same function as a communicative and flexible tool for language learning.

Further on, no vital differences in type of exercises are to be found and both materials focus on communication, which coheres with both *Gyll* and *Course Syllabus 2000*. According to Breen et al. (1979) students should be encouraged to learn language through communicative skills, not the other way around, as in learning language first and let communication come along with increased language skills. A good textbook, according to Breen et. al., needs to have both *content material* such as actual data and information and *process material* which means units or frameworks for activities which in current textbooks are combined in one book unlike older materials. Both *WWE* and *Solid Ground* have clear connections between texts and exercises, which can increase the level of comprehension and create an understanding along with a context for learning that is of vital importance if a student is to remember what he or she studied, according to Bartlett's theory of remembrance (see section 1.2.3). As said before, Bartlett's remembrance theory is controversial but it is most

likely that students have to struggle more to remember and learn things that appear meaningless to them, but even things that appear meaningless are possible to learn.

The list of ‘crucial contents’ in Table 1. (see p. 15) includes *Global perspectives on English as a subject in school*, which is interesting to study while discussing potential differences between the two materials since the two syllabi differ on this particular point. In connection with the introduction of *Course Syllabus 2000* an anthology called *Språkboken* in Swedish or ‘The book of Language’ (translation mine) was produced to educate language teachers in Sweden in different aspects of the new syllabus. One article in this book discusses cultural awareness as a reflection upon languages being expressions for different cultures that students need to understand to be able to learn how to express themselves in a proper way (Tornberg, 2001:183). In that sense, language teachers are to convey different cultural traditions along with their teaching in order to provide students with the possibility of learning languages in a context, not only grammar and syntax, separately. *World Wide English* tries to widen the perspective of English in a more straightforward way through *EWWE* than *Solid Ground* does, but whether it helps the students to widen their impressions is hard to tell since it has not been possible to look into the issue, due to the short time on the market. One thing that might ease the versatile communicative ability though, is a wider knowledge of other cultures and an awareness that includes contacts, information and learning, not only the ability to compare different cultural traditions.

3.2.1 Pedagogical approaches promoted in *World Wide English*

Firstly, a teacher who is to use *WWE* in class needs to consider English as a worldwide language with great variability when it comes to spoken and written variation. The material strives for a global perspective, which becomes clear due to all different *EWWE* texts that you find in the material. Both written and spoken extracts are included from India, Nigeria, Canada, New Zealand and, naturally, America and Britain to emphasise the great variation due to regional and geographical varieties of English language. One difference from *Course Syllabus 2000* is that *Gyll* states that students should benefit from the surrounding world as a source for contacts, information and learning, where *WWE* succeeds in providing great information and possibilities for learning but the aspect of contacts is more problematic. Nowhere in

the material, neither in the textbook nor the teacher's guide, are there any references to contacts that students can find useful to fulfil this aspect of the goal in the syllabus. Teachers need to provide these contacts themselves, which forces them to have great contacts, or at least ideas of where to find them. Luckily, the Internet exists and there are forums such as *e-Twinning*⁵ that function as a breeding ground for relationships between teachers in Europe, whereas the rest of the English-speaking world needs to be accessed from another angle.

No enormous differences between the two textbooks of *World Wide English*, the one designed for social science students and the other for natural science, are to be found, except for the last five chapters in each book. The exercises included in each chapter are structured in a coherent way, which, according to figure 1 and 2 (see p. 22), seems to focus on *writing* exercises along with *other* (an explanation of 'other' exercises can be found in section 2.1). Thereby, teachers do not need to use different approaches for the two textbooks since it is one teaching material, and the teacher's guide is full of supplemental exercises to train different needs that suit both social science and natural science students. As mentioned earlier, all four abilities that CEFR mark as important for high proficiency in language learning are covered in the material, namely, *mediation*, *reception*, *production* and *interaction* (Council of Europe, 2001) with a slightly special emphasis on written skills (see figure 1 and 2 on p. 22).

In practice, no grammatical explanations are included in the textbooks; instead, they are to be found in the key when correcting previously performed exercises. All grammatical instructions are written in English in order to provide teachers and students with a mutual understanding of specific terms so teachers can instruct students in English even when it comes to grammar. For those who need translated grammar instructions, the same texts are available in the teacher's guide for the teacher to distribute. Due to both possibilities teachers can help those who need and challenge the rest by a more authentic learning-situation and follow the syllabus' goal: 'Substantially, both teacher and students should use English as working language' (Skolverket, 2010:2).

⁵ www.etwinning.net/sv/pub/index.htm

3.2.2 Pedagogical approaches promoted in *Solid Ground*

The teacher's approach that is promoted in *Solid Ground* is an active teacher that lets his or her students take their own initiatives and responsibility. By analysing the teacher's guide it becomes clear that several exercises and things for students to work with, outside the visible material in the textbook, are to be considered and chosen from, in order for teachers to provide appropriate exercises and a reasonable workload to his or her target group. Several links to websites and other information are provided in the material that needs to be taken into account in order to handle the teacher's guide, correctly. The teacher might want to expand his or her knowledge concerning the specific topic each chapter represents, and by, wisely, using the teacher's guide all information will be provided. This suggests a teacher that wants to learn and develop, not a teacher who is passive and lets students run the teaching themselves. Passive teachers are a risk that was discussed in section 1.2.4 while presenting the concept *learner autonomy* (Lundahl 2009; Tornberg, 2000). Van Ek says that students need to focus on independence and participation in order to learn as much as possible which can only function when a communicative focus exists in class that includes speaking and writing activities with interaction. *Solid Ground* is full of exercises that focus on oral communication with other students. Of 351 exercises in total in the book, 140 of them (40 %) are speaking exercises (see figure 3 p. 22).

In between the exercises questions are inserted in order to make each student reflect on whether he or she knows enough to proceed, or if there needs to be more practice on specific grammar or prepositions. If so, specific parts in the book with extra focus on those areas are to be considered. This might be an example of *learner autonomy* where the student needs to take responsibility for his or her learning and the teacher has to rely on the student's own ability to decide if the knowledge, or proficiency level is enough or not.

Moreover, the textbook *Solid Ground* has great emphasis on the oral communicative ability, which coheres with Malmberg's description of the practical use of language being superior to grammar nowadays in Sweden (Malmberg, 2001). Several speaking exercises in each chapter are included and after each individual topic you are to discuss your answers with another person. Clear instructions for how to work with each chapter is also available in the textbook and when it comes to grammar students are asked to evaluate their own abilities and practice more if

necessary in a specific *platform* that explains more grammatical issues in Swedish. Moreover, plenty of exercises in writing short stories, texts, in order to improve the fluency and practical usage of the English language are included and the ability to express personal feelings is practiced in different topics, which is a goal emphasised in the syllabus. These exercises are aimed for all students, whereas the students who are very efficient have time to do extra reading and ‘reading for fun’ as well (which is included in the book on specific pages). Here the criteria for personal responsibility becomes crucial, since in order to pass the course the student needs to be able to plan, fulfil and evaluate his or her learning according to *Course Syllabus 2000*. Teachers need to practice *learner autonomy* with their students in order to help them fulfil this goal.

3.3 What kinds of activities are represented in the different materials and how are they constructed?

While analysing these textbooks, structure and focus need to be taken into account in order to clarify what is emphasised in the different teaching materials, and thereby state what needs to be complemented to each material. Figures showing the division of exercises in four categories were made to visualise the difference in focus between the three books: *World Wide English Naturvetenskapsprogrammet*, *World Wide English Samhällsvetenskapsprogrammet* and *Solid Ground*.

Figure 1 and 2 (p. 22) illustrate the division of exercises in the two textbooks of *World Wide English* and they are almost showing the same numbers. *Writing* and *listening* exercises are just as many in both textbooks whereas *speaking* is, slightly more incorporated in the textbook for natural science students and the category *others* for social science students. A clear focus on the personal proficiency abilities permeates the material since writing activities constitute 38 % and exercises called *other*, which include gap-fill-exercises and working with prepositions etc., 39-40 %, depending on which of the two textbooks you look at. *Listening* exercises, apart from the recorded version of the chapter texts, are quite many and *speaking* activities, often to be carried out in pairs or small groups, constitute 15-16 % of the total number of 225-232 exercises. There were many different dialects represented among the audio tracks on the student’s CD, due to *EWV* texts.

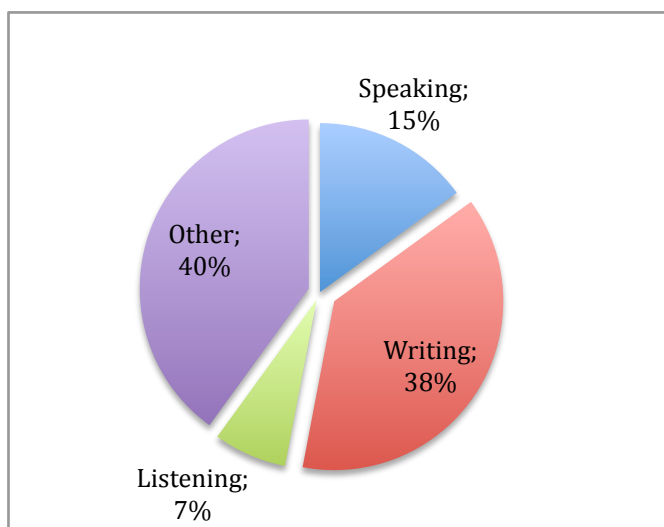


Figure 1. *Division of exercises in World Wide English Samhällsvetenskapsprogrammet, in total 232 (Social Science)*

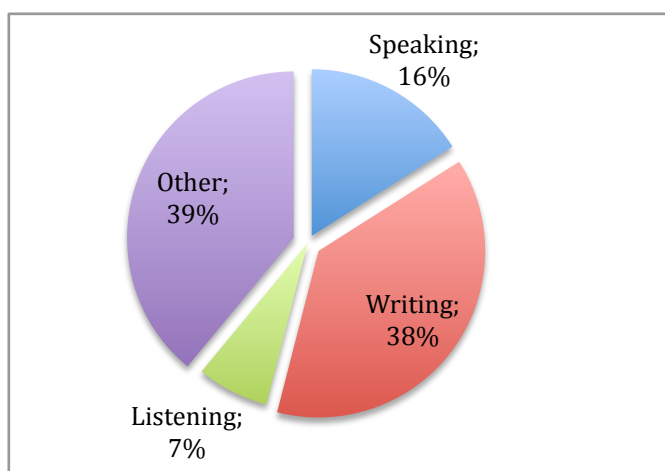


Figure 2. *Division of Exercises in World Wide English Naturvetenskapsprogrammet, in total 225 (Natural Science)*

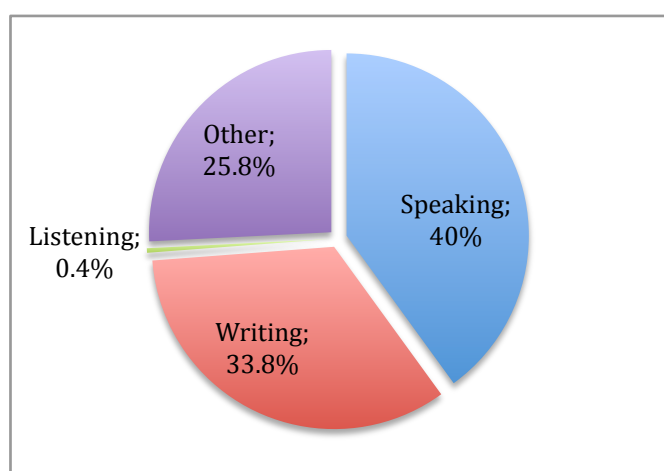


Figure 3. *Division of exercises in Solid Ground, in total 351.*

Figure 3 illustrates the division of exercises in the textbook *Solid Ground A*'s first twenty chapters. *Speaking* exercises make up almost 40 % of the total amount, hence, *writing* and *other* constitutes almost one third each, writing being slightly favoured. Listening exercises are very few, only 14 out of 351, if you do not count the recorded version of the chapter text that is always available with each chapter, but the exercises counted are only the ones following the text, which makes listening exercises roughly 0.4%. *Solid Ground* included ten tracks on the student's CD with recorded versions of the chapter text, five in American English and five in different varieties of British English, including Irish and Scottish accents. In order for students to experience a wider range of dialects other sources need to be taken into account.

Compared to *WWE*, *Solid Ground* offers fewer dialectal differences in its listening activities since *WWE* has got the *EWV*-texts, which are available in recorded versions as well as written and thereby covers more parts of the English speaking world. As for *WWE* teachers will, probably, need to provide students with complementary speaking activities in order for them to increase their oral communicative skills. On the other hand, teachers who use *Solid Ground* will have to add exercises to help some students to increase their personal writing abilities in order to develop a communicative writing ability. It might also be good for teachers who use *Solid Ground* to widen their students' listening abilities by providing exercises that cover more dialectal variation than just varieties of British and American English due to global focus in *Gyll* that reaches a broader range of cultural variation in English-speaking countries.

In conclusion, both *WWE* and *Solid Ground* are constructed to make students who use the materials improve all abilities recommended by CEFR; mediation, reception, production and interaction. Both materials focus on a versatile communicative approach, which includes abilities to express oneself through oral and written extracts in English. A textbook cannot be the only source for language learning since it is limited in its character and several aspects have thereby been omitted due to lack of space. It is to function as a base for the teaching of language and as a source that has to be complemented by other extracts. Examples of further reading and complementary exercises are provided in both teacher's guides.

3.4 Is *World Wide English* a good material to use with social science and natural science students?

Both materials in this study have textbooks for students who are able to apply for further, higher, education after finishing upper secondary school. Most of the students are fairly committed to their education, or at least they were when they applied for upper secondary school. Since the main purpose of this study is to determine how the material *World Wide English* is designed and how well it coheres with the current syllabus, no focus will be put on *Solid Ground* in this part of the analysis.

World Wide English is not the first material that is specially framed for a target group; specific materials for vocational students already exist, but not any other specified for social science or natural science students. By arranging a material that has several chapters specified for a particular target group, a willingness to appeal to a specific interest is clarified. *World Wide English* equips social science students with vocabulary that is more frequent in areas concerning their future education; whereas natural science students learn, for example, math expressions and vocabulary related to space, which is more likely to appear for them. According to Bartlett's remembrance theory (see section 1.2.3), which suggests that people do not learn anything that appears meaningless to them, *World Wide English* tries to appeal to students' interests in order to improve their knowledge of English and possibly, improve the proficiency level even more for those students. If this can show better results in language learning is too early to say, since the material has not been used in class yet. Just because a student applied for the natural science program at upper secondary level does not mean that he or she is only interested in everything concerning natural science, and therefore it is important that both students and teacher cooperate when it comes to contents in a course where a broad range of material can be used.

According to Jäwert (2010), *Gyll* says that students must profit from their knowledge of English in everyday life, in society and in working life; hence, English studies in school need to be adapted to choice of educational program, which becomes clear while reading the document. Teachers of English can more or less fill their subject with any material as long as it concerns the crucial content that is re-introduced along with the syllabus (Skolverket, 2010). Often teachers teach several

initial courses at the same time in different classes. Hence, a material such as *World Wide English* that is already constructed for a specific group might be a preferable choice as a textbook. Nowadays all textbooks have exercises that cohere with the texts being studied, which was not the case when Breen et al. came up with their idea of *content* and *process* material in 1979.

The *sociocultural* approach to knowledge that is encouraged in Swedish schools insists that knowledge does not appear in itself; it is not transferable; it appears in a context, whereas there need to be both devoted teachers and students for knowledge to appear. Tornberg refers to Vygotskij's theory (2009) of students being able to expand their learning abilities through guidance by someone that possesses a greater amount of knowledge, which, once again, emphasises the importance of a good relationship between all parties in school. To facilitate this relationship, clear communication needs to be emphasised at all levels in school and students need to practice their oral and writing communicative skills to achieve these abilities.

One can argue that the obvious move from speaking activities being preferred in *Solid Ground* to more of personal proficiency abilities being emphasised in *World Wide English* (see figure 1-3) is a weakness in the new textbook; and it requires a pedagogical approach that focuses on oral abilities being improved within external material. Since CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001) states that all four abilities need to be taught and practiced to develop a versatile communicative ability, and all students are at different proficiency levels, flexibility needs to permeate education in today's school.

4. Conclusion

Today young people are being, constantly, exposed to English through different forms of media on the Internet and on television and they might even attend chat-rooms or play games online where English is the working language. This implies that many of the students learn English outside school, which is an enormous asset emphasised in the two syllabi *Gy11* and *Course Syllabus 2000*: English taught in school is to equip students to develop a versatile communicative ability and language awareness how to learn language in and outside school. Therefore, teachers need to structure their teaching so it becomes relevant to the students in his or her target group and make sure they develop abilities to estimate differences in formal and informal language and when to use each style in order to conform their expressions to the context.

The purpose of this essay was to evaluate the two textbooks from *World Wide English* to see what the main focus in the material was and how well it cohered with the new syllabus in English *Gy11* for the initial course at upper secondary level. A summary according to the aim and the four head-questions of this study will be provided in this section, each question will function as a category.

- Do *Gy11* and *World Wide English* cohere?

After analysing the new material and syllabus it is possible to affirm that they cohere. More specifically, *Gy11* states that students should have the possibility to discuss topics that appear relevant to them, which is clearly viable according to relevant chapters and texts. Due to several extracts covering different social and dialectical varieties the textbook fulfils this goal of the syllabus. Even the aspect of benefitting from the surrounding world as a resource becomes clear in the textbook due to its focus on English as a global language.

- Are there any differences between *World Wide English* and *Solid Ground* in relation to *Gy11*?

In *Gy11*, a goal of using English as working language in class is included, which might have affected the construction of *World Wide English* in order to facilitate students and teachers with grammar instructions written in English; the equivalent section in *Solid Ground* is written in Swedish. Moreover, students are not only

required to develop abilities to compare different cultural traditions in the English speaking world but according to *Gyll* they are also supposed to develop contacts, information and learning from outside the English speaking world. *World Wide English* has tried to strive for this goal to be fulfilled, but no clear differences in construction of exercises from *Solid Ground* are visible, that might help students to this expanded global achievement; especially, when it comes to contacts in the surrounding English speaking world there are no specific instructions provided compared to the former material.

- What kinds of activities are represented in the different textbooks and how are the materials constructed?

Figures 1, 2 and 3 (p.22) showed how the division between exercises was distributed between *speaking, writing, listening* and *others* in *World Wide English* and *Solid Ground*. The most striking information was that *Solid Ground* has a clear focus on speaking exercises containing 40 % of all exercises in the book compared to 15-16 % in *WWE*. That affects the material and the possibility for students to develop special abilities from outside the textbook itself. On the other hand the categories ‘writing’ and ‘other’ were given greater emphasis in *WWE* due to the possibility to develop high personal proficiency when it comes to those abilities. Since a material cannot include everything that is important for students to learn, it is of vital importance that teachers provide students with other material in order to increase all different abilities such as *mediation, reception, production* and *interaction* which are mentioned in the syllabus as crucial contents and in CEFR (Council of Europe 2001).

- Is *World Wide English* a good material to use with social science and natural science students?

Several textbooks specified for vocational students have been published before, but *World Wide English* is the first material constructed for natural science and social science students on the market; hence, teachers are, through these two textbooks, provided with topics that can appeal to these specific groups which agrees with the syllabus’ goal of adapting teaching to students’ interests. As was shown in the result section, this material might need external input to help students improve their oral communicative abilities even more, since speaking exercises have been significantly reduced compared to *Solid Ground*. It is possible to affirm that *WWE* is a good

material to use with natural science or social science students after evaluating its contents in this essay.

In conclusion, *World Wide English* is an interesting new material on the market that is specially designed for natural science and social science students. It has a wide range of writing exercises and needs to be complemented with speaking exercises in order to give the students, using the material, the possibility to develop a versatile communicative ability, which is one of the major goals in *Gyll*. The global perspective of English as a world language is clearly emphasised through the material but complementary instructions in order to be able to use the surrounding world as a source for contacts need to be included or added through a supplementary source. English as working language in class is facilitated through providing grammar instructions in English, which emphasises the goal for both students and teachers to speak as much English as possible in class. The overall impression of *WWE* can be summarized thus: it is an interesting and fresh material with a focus on all four communicative abilities proposed by CEFR with a specific aim to appeal to a target group of students in order to increase their interest in second language learning.

5. Further Research

As for further research it would be very interesting to investigate the response to this material among teachers and students after some time on the market since it is easier to realise its strengths and weaknesses when there are people to ask for opinions with real experiences from the material. Furthermore, a comparison of how the design of textbooks differs in construction between vocational and theoretical students as target group would widen the knowledge of theories behind textbook-construction, which might be an interesting topic for further research. At last, the implementation of ‘one-to-each’ (one computer to each student), which is a current phenomenon in Swedish schools, will definitely affect the use of textbooks in language learning. Therefore, research on how to use other sources to fulfil the textbook’s role might be of vital interests for teachers in working life.

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