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A literature review on curriculum reform and English as second language teaching and learning

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Abstract:
From the 1960s to the present, the Swedish school has undergone quite a few major reforms, including three new national curricula. The aim of this literature review is to investigate what previous research says about curriculum reform regarding second language teaching and learning in general, and English as a second language in particular. Through analysis of the chosen seven sources, there is some evidence that curriculum reform has affected second language learning and teaching. Especially when it comes to the implementation of curriculum, a subject syllabus plays an essential role in the process of transmitting knowledge, and the dynamic of the classroom is changing, which entails that both teachers’ role and students’ roles are shifting. The teacher is not the only source of knowledge any more, and students do not just sit in the classroom and listen to the teacher. Students’ influence is highlighted both in the curriculum and in the classroom. Communicative competence has become the focus of the teaching and learning of a second language.

Keywords: Curriculum reform, English as second language, ESL, upper secondary school, second language teaching and learning
## Table of contents

1. **Introduction** .................................................................................................................. 1  
   1.1 Aim of study and research questions ............................................................................ 1

2. **Background** .................................................................................................................. 2  
   2.1 Language policy ........................................................................................................ 2  
      2.1.1 Language policy: The European Commission ...................................................... 2  
      2.1.2 Language policy in Sweden ............................................................................... 2  
      2.1.3 Official school documents .................................................................................. 3  
   2.2 Second language teaching and learning ...................................................................... 4  
      2.2.1 The grammar translation approach .................................................................. 4  
      2.2.2 The communicative approach .......................................................................... 5

3. **Theoretical framework** ................................................................................................... 6  
   3.1 Curriculum theory ..................................................................................................... 6  
   3.2 Classifying curriculum theory .................................................................................. 6  
      3.1.1 Curriculum as transmission of Information ......................................................... 7  
      3.1.2 Curriculum as end product ............................................................................... 8  
      3.1.3 Curriculum as process ...................................................................................... 8  
      3.1.4 Curriculum as praxis ......................................................................................... 9

4. **Methods and material** ..................................................................................................... 9  
   4.1 Design, selection strategies and criteria .................................................................... 9  
   4.2 Analysis .................................................................................................................... 10  
   4.3 Ethical aspects ........................................................................................................ 10  
   4.4 Presentation of sources .......................................................................................... 11

5. **Results** .......................................................................................................................... 12  
   5.1 Curriculum reform: Curriculum as transmission of knowledge .............................. 12  
   5.2 Curriculum reform: Curriculum as end products .................................................. 13  
   5.3 Curriculum reform: Curriculum as process ............................................................. 14  
   5.4 Curriculum reform: Curriculum as praxis ................................................................. 14  
   5.5 Summary of findings ............................................................................................... 15

6. **Discussion** ...................................................................................................................... 15  
   6.1 Main findings in relation to the teaching and learning English as second language 15  
   6.2 Limitation ................................................................................................................ 17  
   6.3 Conclusion .............................................................................................................. 18  
   6.4 Future study ............................................................................................................ 18

References ............................................................................................................................ 19
1. Introduction
Throughout the last century, a number of large reforms have been carried out in the Swedish upper secondary schools. These reforms have affected the education system in a number of ways. In the 1960s, the Social Democratic government implemented a reform of the compulsory and secondary school system. This reform, among other things, intended to equalize opportunities to education and reduce social class differences (Lundgren, 2014, p. 82). The school system became centralized and standardized nationally. In upper secondary school there were three directions, including 3 and 4-year academic programs, 2-year vocational programs, and adult programs. In addition, a new curriculum was introduced.

The centralization of the school system had been questioned from the 1960s from the very outset because of its perceived lack of vitality and dynamic nature (Adolfsson, 2013, p. 290). In December 1993, the Swedish parliament approved legislation for new curricular guidelines for the entire educational system. The reforms in the beginning of the 1990s not only changed the organizational structure of the education system at all levels, but also the grading system and the education agency. The new national agency for education (Skolverket) took the responsibility for the schools from Skolöverstyrelsen. Under the new national curriculum (Lpf 94 for upper secondary school), the Swedish school underwent a major reform, resulting in wide-ranging change in the curriculum. With the new curriculum, students chose between “special” or “general” courses in English and mathematics. There were still two directions in terms of programs offered in the upper secondary school: vocational and academic. The reform aimed to decrease the discrepancy between academic and vocational programs and reduce uneven recruitment into higher education. According to Lindahl (2015) the two-year vocational programs were extended to three years, and it was decided that all upper secondary school students should have a common core of knowledge in general subjects, called core subject [Sw. kärnämnen]. All upper secondary school programs made student eligible for higher education. (p. 32) Adult programs were set up to enable vocational students to pursue higher education after two years of vocational program training. The education system became less centralized.

In 2011 the government established a new reform, with the aim of improving student results and raising the status of the teaching profession. The reform has increasingly focused on lifelong learning. These reforms had a huge impact on curricula both from pre-schools to upper secondary schools. One significant change is that the syllabi for different subjects are now included in the new curriculum.

From the 1960s to today the second language classroom has gone through many changes. The teacher’s dominant role has changed; the teacher takes the role of facilitator, language partner to students, and so on. A second language teaching and learning methods have also changed, and communicative competence has gained a prominent position in a second language classroom. Moreover, students’ influence is highly accepted in the teaching. An interesting question is whether all these change in the second language classroom have had something to do with curriculum reforms.

1.1 Aim of study and research questions
The aim of this thesis is to investigate what previous research says about curriculum reform regarding second language teaching and learning in general, and English as a second language in particular. The following researcher questions have been formulated:
1) What does previous research say about curriculum reforms regarding second language acquisition?

2) What does curricular language policy mean for the teaching and learning of a second language?

2. Background
In this section, the focus is on language policies and second language teaching and learning. In terms of language policy, both that of European Union and Sweden will be taken into consideration. In addition, the curricula Lgy_70, Lpf 94 and Gy 2011 will be presented here.

2.1 Language policy
A policy is a set of principles used to guide decisions and achieve outcomes. Language policy according to Spolsky (2004) is about choice. It may be the choice of a specific sound, or expression, or of a specific variety of language. It may be the choice regularly made by an individual, or a socially defined group of individuals, or a body with authority over a defined group of individuals. (p. 217)

2.1.1 Language policy: The European Commission
There are many languages used in Europe. For the European Commission such linguistic diversity can be a challenge for Europe, but the commission believes that the challenge is a rewarding one. In fact the European commission is very keen to promote language learning and linguistic diversity so as to improve basic language skills. According to “Barcelona objective 2002” (European commission, 2017)¹ EU citizens should be able to communicate in two languages other than their mother tongue. It is believed that languages can build bridges between people, giving EU citizens access to other countries and cultures, and enabling people to understand each other better. Foreign language skills play an increasingly important role in making young people more employable and equipping them for working abroad. The new change was made by the Commission in 2008, including that:

i) Everyone should have the opportunity to communicate appropriately in order to realize his or her potential and make the most of the opportunities offered by the modern and innovative EU.

ii) Everybody should have access to appropriate language training or to other means of facilitating communication in the EU.

iii) In the spirit of solidarity, even those who may not be able to learn other languages should be provided with appropriate means of communication, allowing them access to the multilingual environment. (Commission of the European Communities, 2008, p. 3)

2.1.2 Language policy in Sweden
To implement the EU language policy in Sweden, the Swedish government also highlights diversity in their official Curriculum documents. It is written in the Curriculum for upper secondary school (Gy 2011) that “the internationalisation of Swedish society and increasing cross-border mobility place high demands on the ability of people to live with and appreciate the values inherent in culture diversity” (Skolverket, 2011, p. 4). According to Sweden’s language law (Språklagen), Swedish is the main language in Sweden (SFS 2009: 600), and in the year 2000 five more minority languages were included as official languages: Finnish, Meänkieli, Sámi, Romani and Yiddish. English is not mentioned in the language law, but due to the globalization, English has been widely accepted as a lingua franca in the world and it has

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¹ The last update is 29/12/2017.
gained a stronger position in the Swedish education system in relation to other foreign languages. English has been taught as a foreign language in Swedish schools since 1946, and it became a compulsory subject by 1994-1995. In the *Curriculum for upper secondary school* concerning the English language, it is written:

> The English language surrounds us in our daily lives and is used in such diverse areas as politics, education and economics. Knowledge of English thus increases the individual’s opportunities to participate in different social and cultural contexts, as well as in international studies and working life. (Skolverket, 2011, p. 53)

### 2.1.3 Official school documents

The curriculum plays an important role in education, because it not only shows the goal of education in general, but also the content of education and even how the content should be taught and learnt in the school. Lundgren (2014) states that in Sweden, the curriculum has a more concrete meaning, and it is a document including the goals of education, as well the content (p. 144). According to Lundgren (2014), the word curriculum has a wider meaning in the United Kingdom and the United States. There, the curriculum is not only seen as a concrete document, but also includes the whole learning and teaching philosophy and implementation behind the document (p. 144). A syllabus according to Merriam-Webster dictionary is a summary outline of a discourse, treatise, or course of study or of examination requirements. Under Swedish school context syllabus can be interpreted as a document that outlines the aim of the subject, core content of a course and knowledge requirements.

For this literature review, the Swedish curricula Lgy 70, Lpf 94 and Gy 11 will be taken into consideration. Lgy 70 was published in 1970 by Skolöverstyrelsen and edited in 1975. The document contains not only overall goals and guidelines, but also students in the centre, focus on the future, home-school-society, personality development and teaching, individual development, students’ social development, teachers’ role, the operation forms and collaboration for students’ best. There were no specific syllabi for English subject coming with Lgy 70.

In 1993, the government presented its proposal for a new curriculum and new grading system for upper secondary school. The new curriculum Lpf 94 was published in 1994. Apart from overall goals and guidelines, Lpf 94 also includes fundamental values and tasks of the school. In Lpf 94, the general goals regarding knowledge are listed, and the teacher’s responsibility is outlined. The goal for achieving the common values of society is also listed. Students’ responsibility and influence, the choice of education–work and social life and the responsibility of the principal are all mentioned in Lpf 94. Before the 2011 curriculum reform, there were concrete syllabi for English A, B and C. In each syllabus, there were goals that students would achieve after completing the course and grading criteria for pass, pass with distinction, and pass with special distinction.

Gy 2011 was published in 2011. Gy 2011 includes all the content outlined in Lpf94, such as fundamental values and tasks of the school as well as overall goals and guidelines. Within Gy 2011, syllabi were available for all the existing subjects like art, English, mathematics, and so on. Syllabi for English courses such as English 5, 6 and 7 were included. According to Parkes & Harris (2007), a syllabus serves as a learning tool. The syllabus can guide students’ learning

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2 https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/syllabus
both in the classroom and outside of the classroom. (p. 57). For English subject, aim of the subject and courses in the subject are stated clearly. For each course English 5, 6 and 7, core content was included, and consisted of three parts: content of communication, reception, and production and interaction. In addition, knowledge requirements were also included, for the grades A, C and E. The grades B and C are used when not all knowledge requirements of A or C have been fulfilled.

2.2 Second language teaching and learning
In Sweden, the main language is Swedish. In the country 90% of the population has Swedish as their mother tongue or first language that they learn in school. According to Abrahamsson (2009), a first language is the language that individual acquire first, through exposure to the language by parents and other guardians. The concept of mother tongue is similar to first language, and mother tongue can be defined as the first acquired language or the language one is first exposed to (p. 13). English is taught as a second language in school from 1st grade, although this may vary around the country. Abrahamsson (2009) defines a second language as the language acquired after the first language is established or starts to be established (p. 13). According to Hammarberg (2010), the difference between second language and foreign language is the context how the language is learned. Second language learning takes place in the country where the language is spoken and entails socialization into the new language, while foreign language learning occurs outside the language environment, typically in school and college (Hammarberg, 2010, p. 28). In relation to Hammarberg’s definition, English surely can be recognized as a second language, because in Sweden there is a large population who use the language in public life on a daily basis.

When it comes to teaching a second language, didactics has an important role to play. Didactics is a very old concept from ancient Greece, which means “teaching” or “art of teaching”. Over time the meaning of the word didactics has been changed, and it is used in many different countries as a synonym for “method”. Here in Sweden, according to Tornberg (2015), didactics does not simply deal with methods, but it has also a close relationship with the curriculum, including learning goals and outcomes, the teaching material and the teaching itself (p. 11). In Tornberg’s (2015) own summary didactics deals with teaching in a holistic way (p. 11). Therefore, the didactics of English as second language can be defined as the principle that studies techniques, procedures, strategies, and methods to enhance the teaching process for the acquisition of English as a second language.

2.2.1 The grammar translation approach
When it comes to the methods of teaching and learning English as a second language, there are quite a few approaches used frequently in the classroom. These include the grammar-translation approach, the direct method, the audiolingual method, and the goal of communicative competence. According to Tornberg (2015), the grammar-translation approach has existed throughout the entire history of language teaching (p. 34). The grammar-translation approach is an approach of teaching foreign language or a second language derived from the traditional method of teaching Greek and Latin. Students are required to learn grammatical rules and then apply those rules by translating sentences from their first language or mother tongue to the target language.

2.2.2 The communicative approach
The communicative approach emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of study. Tornberg (2015) points out that language is a means of communication, and language
is action and language has content. She also says that the function of language should be in focus when you try to learn a language (p. 53). In the communicative approach, the students are thought to learn the target language better through interaction with one another and the instructor. When it comes to second language teaching, Lindberg (2010) says that the goal of the teaching should lead students to communicative competence in the target language. The teacher should encourage his or her students to use the target language both in the classroom and outside of the classroom. This method also regards students experience as an important part in language learning. Thus, students are encouraged to incorporate their personal experiences into their language learning.

In order to be successful in communication, learners of English must have communicative competence. In 1972 the term communicative competence was introduced by sociolinguist Hymes, which encompasses not only knowledge but also the ability to put knowledge into use in communication (Hedge, 2000, p. 45). Later this ability of communication was named by Bachman (1990) as communicative language ability, and its key components are linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence, and fluency. (Hedge, 2000, p. 46) When it comes to linguistic competence, Hedge (2000) says that it involves knowledge of spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary, word formation, grammatical structure, sentence structure, and linguistic semantics (p. 47). Hedge (2000) also points out that it is very important for the teacher to note that linguistic competence is an integral part of communicative competence (p. 47). In other words, it is possible for a learner to become communicatively competent and linguistically competent simultaneously. Therefore in the classroom language teaching aims to have correctness in the use of rules, and at the same time, to tolerate errors as part of the process of achieving communicative competence.

In order to gain communicative competence, Lindberg (2011) proposes interaction and conversation in the classroom. In terms of interaction, Vygotsky believed that learning takes place in the interaction with others. Social interaction plays an important role in the process of cognitive development. Students can learn better if they interact with those who have a better understanding or a higher ability level than themselves. Vygotsky (1978) said that learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers (p. 90). Normally these people can be their peers, teachers, parents and so on. Vygotsky’s “zone of proximal development” provides a clear picture about how the learning can be fully achieved. Vygotsky says that there is a zone for which students are cognitively prepared, but they require help and social interaction to fully develop. A teacher or more experienced peer is able to provide “scaffolding” to support students’ evolving understanding of knowledge domains or development of complex skills (Lindberg, 2011, p. 40, 41). Based on Vygotsky’s “zone of proximal development”, students should be given plenty of opportunity to interact and have conversations with each other. And these interactions and conversations ultimately will lead students to communicative competence. As a matter of fact, conversation has an essential role in human life, because most of our daily interaction with others, discussion and negotiation are carried out through conversation. Therefore, conversation is a powerful tool in a second language learning classroom, and it enables students to interact with each other and share learning experience and knowledge with each other, and ultimately students learn from each other.

Regarding conversation in second language learning, Lindberg (2011) says that conversations build more than any other linguistic activity on interaction and interaction between people, and they are also the most common way to use the language (p. 8). It is important for the teacher to
create activities where conversation can be used to develop students’ communicative competence. However, the content and activities must be based on students’ prior knowledge and experience. This is because students definitely learn more effectively if they already know something about the chosen content and the content has some connection with their particular background and culture. According to Lindberg (2011), one of the most important tasks that the teacher has is to choose teaching content and activities based on students actual specific needs (p. 236). Lindberg (2011) especially points out that the teaching of second language must adapt to the target group’s need (p. 237). The teacher also has the responsibility to motivate students to have the desire to communicate, use and develop the second language.

3. Theoretical framework
This section will present curriculum theory and practice. Both Glatthorn et al’s (2006) and Mark Smith’s (1996, 2000) four categories of curriculum in relation to the practice will be presented. Glatthorn et al’s four categories are clearly linked to Smith’s four categories, because Smith’s categories reflect and synthesize curriculum theory into four easily understood approaches; Smith’s four categories are the following: 1) curriculum as a body of knowledge to be transmitted via a syllabus, 2) curriculum as end product, 3) curriculum as process and 4) curriculum as praxis. The choice of the four classifications of curriculum theory is relevant, because these four categories help to answer the research questions, “What does curricular language policy mean for the teacher and learning of a second language?” and “What does previous research say about curricular language policy reform?”

3.1 Curriculum theory
Curriculum theories have been developing for centuries in many western countries. In the USA, curriculum theory was derived from the scientific management of Ralph Tyler and then applied to schools, so curriculum theorists could tell teachers what to teach as if they were manual workers. Tyler and others whom he has influenced attempt to describe and explain, and the primary intent of their work is to help educators make more reasoned choices (Glatthorn, Boschee, & Whitehead, 2006, p. 75). In Sweden curriculum theory was introduced first by Ulf P. Lundgren (1977) and the theory itself has touched many disciplines, such as history, science and philosophy. Glatthorn et al. (2006) define curriculum theory as a set of related educational concepts that afford a systematic illumination of curricular phenomena (p. 74).

3.2 Classifying curriculum theory
When it comes to the function of curriculum theories, Lundgren (2014) says that curriculum theory aims to answer questions about what knowledge is legitimized through the curriculum formulations and how different selection processes of content and method occur and are influenced by various actors in the educational system as well as the social, economic, and cultural structure of society (p. 141). In addition to the functions that Lundgren mentioned here, Glatthorn et al. (2006) also write that curriculum theory can provide a set of conceptual tools for analyzing curriculum proposal, for illuminating practice, and for guiding reform (p. 73). Based on the function of curriculum theory, Glatthorn et al. (2006) divide curriculum theories into four categories in relation to their domain of inquiry, which are Structure-oriented theories, Value-oriented theories, Content-oriented theories, and Process-oriented theories (p. 78).

1. **Structure-oriented theories** are concerned primarily with analyzing the components of the curriculum and their interrelationships. Structure-oriented theories tend to be descriptive and explanatory in intent.

2. **Value-oriented theories** are concerned primarily with analyzing the values and assumptions of curriculum makers and their products. Value-oriented theories tend to be critical in nature.
3. **Content-oriented theories** are concerned primarily with determining the content of the curriculum. Content-oriented theories tend to be prescriptive in nature.

4. **Process-oriented theories** are concerned primarily with describing how curricula are developed or recommending how they should be developed. Some process-oriented theories are descriptive in nature; others are more prescriptive. (Glatthorn et al., 2006, p. 78)

Another curriculum theorist Smith (1996, 2000) classifies curriculum theories into four categories based on the implementation of curricula:

1. **Transmission of information**: Curriculum as a body of knowledge to be transmitted via a syllabus
2. **End product**: curriculum as an attempt to achieve certain ends-products
3. **Process**: curriculum as a process
4. **Praxis**: curriculum as praxis (action that is committed) (Glatthorn et al., 2006, p. 90)

Even though the terms in the classifications that Glatthorn et al. (2006) and Smith (1996, 2000) use are different, both their categories share many similarities. For this literature review, the categories that Smith classified will be used. Glatthorn et al. have combined their categories and Smith’s into a figure that can show the clear link between the two models.

Figure 1. *Elements of Curriculum Theory and Practice*

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3.2.1 **Curriculum as transmission of information**

Smith regards curriculum as a body of knowledge to be transmitted via a syllabus. In this sense, the syllabus plays an important role in terms of knowledge transmission, because the syllabus as an educational document organizes a body of knowledge-content, and subjects within a course. In order to know what kind of knowledge or content is to be transmitted to students, the syllabus is a guide both to teachers or course facilitators and to students as well. Therefore a syllabus in Sweden often contains core content and knowledge requirement. A syllabus is considered as a guide to the students to obtain a body of knowledge or content. It helps the students to know about the subject in detail, why it is a part of their course of study, what are the expectations from students, consequences of failure, etc. Education, in this sense, is the
process by which these are transmitted or ‘delivered’ to students by the most effective methods that can be devised (Blenkin et al. 1992, p. 23). Curriculum as transmission of information matches Glatthorn’s structured-oriented theories. According to Glatthorn et al. (2006), structure-oriented theorists generally wish to transmit the body of knowledge, but tend to rely upon empirical research, using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to inquire into curriculum phenomena (p. 92).

### 3.2.2 Curriculum as end product

The idea of curriculum as end product was influenced in the late 1970s by the rise of vocationalism and the concern with competencies. Vocationalism can be defined by encyclopedia.com as, “an educational philosophy or pedagogy, claiming that the content of the curriculum should be governed by its occupational or industrial utility, and marketability as human capital.” When vocationalism is involved in education, teaching is only focused on what knowledge and skill should be taught to students to prepare them for a particular career. Education in this way is seen as a technical exercise. Objectives are set, a plan is drawn up, and then applied, and the outcomes (products) are measured. Glatthorn et al. (2006) writes that educators using this approach are less concerned with how curriculum is taught than what the end product is, and what the goals and objectives are that are used to achieve that product or result (p. 92). In other words, educators are more interested in what is to be taught or learned in order to empower students to work and live their lives. End-product approaches seem to be related to Glatthorn’s content-oriented theories. According to Glatthorn et al. (2006), content-oriented theorists are often concerned with determining and specifying the major sources as well as the details that influence the selection and organization of curriculum content (p. 92).

### 3.2.3 Curriculum as process

Glatthorn et al. (2006) states that viewing curriculum as process places the emphasis on the interaction among teacher, student, parents, and knowledge rather than on a syllabus and/or on an end product (p. 93). What is actually taking place in the classroom as well as the learning process itself is the focus of the curriculum. In other words, curriculum is not a physical thing, but rather the interaction of teachers, students and knowledge. Often an emphasis is placed on thinking about planning, justifications and procedures, and actual interventions, as well as providing feedback and changes during the curriculum process (Glatthorn et al., 2006, p. 93). In terms of planning, an earlier curriculum planning approach, the instructional design process, is adopted. According to Glatthorn et al. (2006),

> The instructional design process can help establish the first systematic approach to the development of instructional materials and teaching strategies. Instructional design is the systematic development of instructional specifications using learning and instructional theory to ensure the quality of instruction. It is the entire process of analysis of learning needs and goals and the development of a delivery system to meet those needs. (Glatthorn et al., 2006, p. 93)

Glatthorn et al’s concept of value-oriented theories relates well to Smith’s process and end product approaches. Glatthorn et al. (2006) says that value-oriented theories are primarily engaged in “educational consciousness-raising,” attempting to sensitize educators to the values and issues that lie at the heart of the stated curriculum (p. 94).

In this sense, a curriculum is a particular form of specification about the practice of teaching. A curriculum is uniquely designed to provide teacher and students information what to teach and what to learn from a course. Outcomes are no longer the central and defining feature, instead teachers and students work together to develop content and means for their specific
course. At the end students have a clear voice in the way that the sessions evolve, and the focus is on interactions.

3.2.4 Curriculum as praxis/awareness

According to Glatthorn et al. (2006), curriculum as praxis deals primarily with practical deliberation (p. 94). The praxis concept encourages the students and teacher to reach a higher level of awareness through curriculum differentiation and with the use of technology to speed up the process (Glatthorn et al., 2006, p. 94). Meanwhile, there is a need to tailor teaching environment and practice to create appropriately different learning experiences for different students (Glatthorn et al., 2006, p. 94). The focus here is to create a differentiated learning environment, in which students are encouraged to engage their abilities to the greatest extent possible, including risk taking and knowledge and skill building. Teachers should provide students opportunities to try out their ideas and practice for themselves to see where the ideas will work and where they prove to be inadequate. Teachers should study differences in understanding, learning modalities, and interests. To sum up in Glatthorn et al.’s (2006) own words, curriculum as praxis not only allows for description and explanation, but also emphasizes prediction and problem solving at higher levels. It is a curriculum that makes teachers and students more introspective on a global level and allows teachers and students to see through each other’s eyes. Learning involves exploration and is based on reflection, exploration, and physical experience. (Glatthorn et al., 2006, p. 96)

4. Material and method

This section consists of four parts. Apart from the study design, data collection, selection strategies and criteria used, other parts like the method of analysis, ethical aspects and the material will be presented as well.

4.1 Design, selection strategies and criteria

The aim of this thesis is to investigate what previous research says about curriculum reform regarding second language teaching and learning in general, and English as second language in particular. This is carried out through searching for and studying a number of available relevant theses and articles. To conduct this literature study, a systematic review can be useful, because a search of relevant information sources will help determine what is already known about curriculum reform regarding second language teaching and learning, especially regarding English as second language, and how extensively the topic has already been researched. Therefore the design of the thesis is a systematic review. A systematic review is a type of literature review that collects and critically analyses multiple research studies or papers, and afterwards compiles all the literature within one particular chosen topic or issue (Barajas, Forsberg & Wengström, 2013, p. 31).

In order to start the search in databases, key words were determined through using the synonym dictionary thesaurus and looking at keywords used in the different articles as well, which resulted in curriculum reform or development, second language teaching and learning, secondary school, and English as a second language. To collect relevant literature for the topic curriculum reform and second language teaching and learning, and English as second language in particular, the database ERIC was used, because the search engine gives a wide range of outcomes after entering the search words. The specific search word combinations used were ("English (Second Language)") AND SU.EXACT("Curriculum Development") AND (SU.EXACT("Second Language Instruction") OR SU.EXACT("Second Language Learning"))
AND (SU.EXACT("Secondary Education") OR SU.EXACT("High Schools")). To guarantee that the source is recent, the publication date of the sources was limited to 2007-2017. Although the database ERIC is an authoritative database of indexed and full-text education literature and resources, it is difficult to find all the relevant literature especially in relation to the Swedish upper secondary school, because most of the sources from databases are mainly from English speaking countries. Thus another search was also conducted on Google Scholar by using *Curriculum Development + Second Language Instruction + Secondary Education*. Moreover, a few articles were also found through recommendations of additional texts, and some of the texts were found in the reference lists of the chosen articles.

All the abstracts of the sources that found from 2007 to 2017 were read to determine if the sources were relevant to the research questions. To guarantee that the source was relevant to the study, it had to mainly focus on curriculum reform and implementation of the curricula regarding second language teaching and learning. At the end seven sources were included in this literature review. The sources form a body of literature that is relevant to the study and allow conclusions to be drawn about the topic of curriculum reform regarding second language teaching and learning, and English as a second language in particular.

4.2 Analysis
The sources chosen for this literature review will be analyzed by a model called content analysis. Eriksson Barajas et al. (2013) say that content analysis is a research technique used to make replicable and valid inferences by interpreting and coding textual material. The data is classified systematically and step by step to identify patterns and themes, and the aim is to describe and quantify a specific phenomenon (p. 147). To be able to identify the pattern to the topic, Glatthorn (2006) and Smith’s (1996, 2000) four categories of implementation of curricula will be used to code and interpret the source material. These four categories are:
1. *Transmission of information*: Curriculum as a body of knowledge to be transmitted via a syllabus
2. *End product*: curriculum as an attempt to achieve certain ends-products
3. *Process*: curriculum as a process
4. *Praxis*: curriculum as praxis (action that is committed) (Glatthorn, 2006, p. 90)

4.3 Ethical aspects
To answer the research questions, two theses, one chapter from a book and four articles are used. Most sources were found through the ERIC database, using the delimiter peer-reviewed. In terms of ethical aspects, Eriksson Barajas et al. (2013) state that ethical considerations in systematic literature reviews should be made regarding the selection and presentation of results (p. 69). Three fundamental principles that the author must follow are listed here:
- Choose literature that has been approved by an ethical committee or organization that take the ethical aspect seriously.
- Give an account of all the articles that are included in the literature review
- Present all results that may support, respectively, not support, any hypothesis the author makes. (p. 70)
The chosen sources are either a full doctoral thesis or licentiate thesis or published in peer-reviewed journals. All the results that may support, respectively, not support, any hypothesis the author makes are presented in the results of the Content analysis.

4.4 Presentation of sources
1. Lundgren (2012), *Den svenska läroplansteoretiska forskningen – en personligt hållens reflektion* is a book chapter on the concept curriculum theory and its development in Sweden and how the Swedish educational history can be understood from a research perspective. The
chapter discusses the formation and the question of knowledge, as well as challenges the teacher training education and school will face in the future.

2. Lindahl (2015), *Vocational English in Policy and Practice*, is a licentiate thesis from the Department of Education and Special Education, University of Gothenburg. Through studying the curricula Lgy70, Lpf 94 and Gy 2011 and interview, the thesis aims to examine in what ways vocational English is part of English in the building and construction programme in Sweden, and what the influences are for such pedagogy. The thesis includes two parts. One part is a textual policy analysis of the curricula Lgy70, Lpf 94 and Gy 2011, and the other part is reports on semi-structured interviews with six practicing English teachers who taught English in the Building and Construction programme in five different schools in central Sweden.

3. Han and Yin (2016), *College English Curriculum Reform in Mainland China: Context, Content and Changes*, is an article chosen from a journal called Asian Education Studies. Although the article is focused on college English, the teaching of English at the college level in China is similar to teaching English at the upper secondary level in Sweden due to the status and prevalence of the English language in Sweden. The aim of the article is to investigate what contextual factors have initiated the reform of the college English curriculum, how college English teaching and learning in China is influenced by the ever-changing context, and to what extent years of implementation and effort made to deepening the reform have influenced the current college English teaching and learning. (Han and Yin, 2016, p. 1) The analysis is carried out through a contextual analysis of the implementation of the latest round of college English curriculum reform in Mainland China.

4. Lundahl, Arreman Lundström and Rönnberg (2010), *Setting Things Right? Swedish Upper Secondary School Reform in a 40-Year Perspective*, aims to analyse the current reform of upper secondary education and relate it to previous reforms during a 40-year period in terms of continuity and breaks, mainly with regard to the major function of the reforms and the structuring and control of educational contents. (Lundahl, et al., 2010, p. 46)

5. Adolfsson’s (2013) doctoral thesis is called *Kunskapsfrågan: En läroplansteoretisk studie av den svenska gymnasieskolans reformer mellan 1960-talet och 2010-talet*. The thesis aims to deepen the understanding of the changes in the formation of knowledge in Swedish upper secondary curricula between the 1960s and 2010s based on a “classical” theoretical framework of curriculum theory (i.e. the “frame-factor theory”). (Adolfsson, 2013, p. 285) By relating these changes to the changes in the contemporary socio-economic context, the thesis also investigates how these knowledge-changes could attain legitimacy in relation to the socio-economic context and what these changes meant in terms of the attribution of secondary school pupils and teachers (Adolfsson, 2013, p. 286).

6. Berggren (2012), *En gemensam resa eller skilda resor. Talet om kärnämnen i gymnasieskolan 1990–2009*, is an article analysing eight policy texts from the period of 1990 to 2009 with Chouliaraki and Fairclough’s (1999) critical discourse analysis (CDA) and Bernstein’s (2000) concept of classification. The aim of the article is to show if students on various upper secondary programs receive the same teaching in core subjects and how the expressed intentions are legitimized (Berggren, 2012, p. 40).

7. Ball, Maguire, Braun & Hoskins (2011), *Policy subject and policy actors in School: some necessary but sufficient analyses*, explores two different ontological positions from which policy in schools and teachers can be viewed. On the other, it begins to conceptualize the
hermeneutics of policy, which is the ways in which policies in schools are subject to complex processes of interpretation and translation.

5. Results

The analysis results are presented with the help of Glatthorn (2006) and Smith’s (1996, 2000) four categories of implementation of curricula and the two research questions, thus, this section will consist of four parts.

5.1 Curriculum reform: Curriculum as transmission of knowledge

Smith (1996, 2000) regards curriculum as a body of knowledge to be transmitted via a syllabus (Glatthorn et al., 2006, p. 90). To transmit knowledge to students, syllabi have an important role to play.

By analysing the politics of knowledge from the 1960s, Adolfsson (2013) finds that Lgy 70 was characterised by quite extensive and detailed descriptions of the content and the type of teaching to be conducted by the teacher (p. 289). The belief is that students would have better opportunities to obtain a good job and reduce the risk of unemployment if they were given restricted freedom of choice during their studies. By analysing secondary school reform from the 1990s, and the curriculum Lpf 94, Adolfsson (2013) finds that the curriculum content was based on general knowledge and generic skills (p. 290). There is a definite change between these two curricula in terms of the content. In Lgy_70, the content is detailed and restricted, while in Lpf 94, knowledge is general and skills are generic. In his analysis of the Swedish school system in the 2010s – the upper secondary school in particular, Adolfsson finds that the new curriculum Gy 11 is introduced with a concrete syllabus for each current subject. Such pre-stipulated core content in each syllabus restricts the teachers’ and pupils’ room for multiple interpretations of the syllabus. Adolfsson’s results from the reforms leading to Lpf 94 and Gy 11 are similar to Lindahl’s. Lindahl (2015) analyses policy of the three latest secondary school curricula and the results show that there is a shift from general forms of English in Lgy 70 and Lpf 94 to a more controlled content and less autonomy for teachers in Gy 2011. (p. 76) Lindahl’s and Lundahl’s results regarding Lgy 70 are slightly different from Adolfsson’s because of the lack of specific subject syllabi.

Lundahl et al. (2010) write that upper secondary education is now intended to satisfy the skills supply needs of the receivers, which implies a narrow definition of competence, the dominating concept of knowledge in report (p. 52). In turn this means that the needs of the labour market and higher education are now the major considerations of objectives, contents and quality of secondary education (Lundahl et al., 2010, p. 52). Lundgren (2012) in a sense also confirms the shift. He writes that through empirical study of the curriculum theory, the American researchers conclude
that education is tightly connected to concrete syllabi (p. 43). Although Ball et al. (2011) do not talk about the shift of the knowledge transmission, they mention that the school here is represented as a cipher of government policy, policy that comes from outside, and which ‘overrides’ local particularities and priorities or principles and this enacts designed teaching and learning (p.613). In other words if the policy is changed, then the way of defining knowledge and knowledge transmission will be changed accordingly.

5.2 Curriculum reform: Curriculum as end product
According to Glatthorn et al. (2006), Curriculum as end product was influenced by the late 1970s with the rise of vocationalism and the concern with competencies. Lgy 70, Lpf 94 and Gy 11 all mention that the school should prepare its students for the job market. Lgy 70 focuses on the job in Sweden. Lpf 94 starts to shift the focus to the international market. Gy 11 focuses on the market both at home and internationally, however, it highlights lifelong learning. Gy 11 makes it clear that knowledge of English increases the individual’s opportunity to participate in different social and cultural contexts, as well as in global studies and working life (Skolverket, 2011, p. 53).

When it comes to vocational training, Lindahl, Lundahl and Adolfsson especially focus on it. To see if curriculum reform affects how much focus school should put on vocational training, it is important to see the policy itself made in different periods. In the 1960s, there was a shortage of labour in different technical sectors. The task was to inspire students to choose the right education and the right course to match the different needs of the society. Lundahl et al. (2010) point out that vocational and academic programmes were separate from each other in the 1960s. Vocational programmes were organized in blocks associated with broad sectors of working life (p. 48). According to Lgy 70, knowledge was strongly linked to usefulness and was regarded as an important means to reach and meet various desirable external values and needs. In the 1990s Sweden underwent an economic crisis, and it resulted in very high unemployment and high economic cutbacks to the public sector. In the curriculum reform, it is stated that students have the responsibility to prepare themselves for the future, not the system (Adolfsson, 2013, p. 289). Through the analysis of the three latest upper secondary school curricula Lindahl (2015) points out that all three curricula highlight the end product internationalisation. Internationalisation means that teaching should be focused on what knowledge and skill should be taught to students to prepare them for an international working life. Thus, after school students are ready to work in Sweden or elsewhere with their English competence. In Lpf 94 and Lgy 70, there is no difference between the goals for vocational or academic students, but in Gy 2011 the goals are slightly different. Students in a vocational programme should have ‘achieved a level of professional expertise accepted by the industry as providing good preparation for professional life’ (Lindahl, 2015, p. 78). Adolfsson (2013) confirms this after an analysis of the secondary school reform from the 2010s, and he points out that upper secondary school programs and courses need to be more specialized and pre-stipulated by the Swedish National Agency of Education in order to better prepare pupils for future employment or further study (p. 291). Lundahl et al. (2010) show similar results, namely that all upper secondary education reforms take the need of adapting education to rapid changes in working life as a key rationale, i.e. the economic functions of upper secondary education have been consistently perceived to be crucial (p. 54). According to Han and Yin (2016), the implementation of the curriculum reform has changed the organisational culture and teaching philosophy in institutions. The policy makers realize that students need communicative competence in English in order to be able to compete in the job market. Curriculum reform does affect the end product. Overall curriculum reform seems to follow the market or economy, and the end product changes accordingly.
5.3 Curriculum reform: Curriculum as a process
Glatthorn et al. (2006) states that viewing curriculum as process places the emphasis on the interaction among teacher, student, parents and knowledge rather than on the syllabus and / or on an end product (p. 93). Han and Yin (2016) claim that curriculum reform affects the teaching approach when they look at Chinese curriculum reform in 2007. They say, “The implementation of college English curriculum reform facilitates the transition from the traditional grammar-translation approach to the communicative language teaching approach” (p. 5). Even though Lundgren (2012) does not state that the curriculum reform changes the teaching approach, by analysis of curriculum development and learning theory, changes are found in the teaching and learning methods. Accordingly the teachers’ role is also changed. Han and Yin’s (2016) research results clearly show that the curriculum reform in 2007 also changes both the teachers’ and students’ role in the classroom, and teachers will take the role of organiser or facilitator instead of instructor and students’ autonomy is highlighted. Lundahl et al. (2010) bring up the concept ‘professional teacher’. Professional teachers can be defined as self-governing and responsible teachers, seemed to fit like a glove in a decentralised school system managed by objectives and result (p. 52). Adolfssson (2013) also points out this change when he analyses school reform of the 1990s, and he writes that:

Socio-cultural oriented knowledge discourse’ was defined as relative and contextual. Learning was therefore understood to occur in social contexts and new knowledge was understood to be constituted in inter-subjective meetings. (Adolfsson, 2013, p. 290)

5.4 Curriculum reform: Curriculum as praxis
The concept curriculum as praxis encourages students and teachers to reach a higher level of awareness through curriculum differentiation and with the use of technology to speed up the process (Glatthorn et al., 2006, p. 94). In other words, the focus is to create a differentiated learning environment, in which students are encouraged to engage their abilities to the greatest extent possible. Through interviews with six upper secondary teachers, Lindahl (2015) found that the curriculum change affects the teaching, because all six teachers agree that students’ influence is important to the English teaching. Furthermore, those six teachers even make an effort to individualise their teaching, and adopt their teaching to the needs and presumed interests of their students (p. 117). When analysing Chinese curriculum reform in 2007, Han and Yin (2016) also say that the curriculum reform also changes the dynamic of the classroom; students have more autonomy, which somewhat contradicts Lindahl’s finding, because Lindahl found that students autonomy is limited in the classroom after the 2011 curriculum reform. However, curriculum reform in China is a bit different from Sweden, because Sweden has undergone quite a few reforms from the1960s to the present, whereas in China, there has been one reform all these years. Han and Yin (2016) write that:

The innovated computer- and classroom-based college English teaching model, which attaches high importance to individualised teaching and autonomous learning, has put forward high requirements for the development of students’ autonomy. (Han and Yin, 2016, p. 7)

Berggren (2012) does not specifically say that the curriculum has changed the dynamic of the classroom, but in a sense his results can be interpreted as meaning that the form and content of subject teaching in different programs are more individualised.
4.3 Summary of the findings
Through analysis of the research results from seven chosen sources, the findings can be summarized as follows:

1. Along with curriculum reform, a body of knowledge to be transmitted is changed, and syllabi come in and play an essential role in the knowledge transmission process.
2. Along with curriculum reform, the end products are changed; internationalization has become more and more important in Sweden. To prepare students to compete in the international job market has become an important task.
3. Along with curriculum reform, teachers’ and students’ role in the classroom is shifting.
4. Along with curriculum reform in 2011, the teaching and learning is more individualized.

6. Discussion
This section consists of three parts, which include the main findings, limitations of the study and a conclusion.

6.1 Main findings in relation to the teaching and learning English as second language
This thesis aims to investigate what previous research says about curriculum reform regarding second language teaching and learning in general, and English as a second language in particular. There are five articles, one full doctoral thesis and one licentiate thesis chosen for the review. The main finding found in relation to learning and teaching English as second language is that syllabi have a more and more prominent role to play. To transmit knowledge about the English language and the culture of the countries that have English as an official language, syllabi have an important role to play. According to Parkes & Harris (2007), a syllabus serves as a learning tool. The syllabus can guide students’ learning both in the classroom and outside of the classroom. In addition a well-designed syllabus can provide information that assists students to become more effective learners in areas that go beyond the scope of their own course (p. 57). Lgy 70 does not have a specific syllabus for all the English courses offered in upper secondary school, which means that teachers must interpret the syllabus for a modern foreign language to teach their English courses. Lpf 94 comes with a separate syllabus designed specifically for English A, B and C, which includes goals that students will achieve after completing the course and grading criteria. However, core content is not included. According to Adolfsso (2013) and Lindahl (2015) the interpretation of the knowledge to be transmitted is general and generic. With curricula that are available before 2011, it is a big challenge for teachers in English as a second language to plan their teaching. For students, there is no concrete syllabus to guide them to learn. When it comes to Gy 11, syllabi for English 5, 6 and 7 are more concrete because core content is included. Although the knowledge to be transmitted to students seems to be controlled, they provide a clear guideline both for the teacher and the students. For the course English 5, the syllabus gives clear ideas to teachers what to transmit to students. Students also get a good idea what they should learn during the year. With a concrete syllabus in hand, the teacher does not need to waste so much time to interpret the curriculum and make assumptions about what the policy says to convey what knowledge to students. Instead the teacher can save time to prepare their teaching at the outset, and collect and create the relevant and interesting teaching material, and ultimately the
syllabus enables teachers to have time to think more about how effective the knowledge can be transmitted and learned through proper didactic and pedagogical approaches.

However, there are also problems with the implementation of the syllabi for English 5, 6 and 7. They do not leave so much space for teachers’ and students’ influence. At the same time Gy 2011 highlights lifelong learning. To be able to motivate students for lifelong learning, both teachers and students must have room to influence the course. Glatthorn and Smith’s four categories of implementation of curricula overemphasize the use of syllabus. Such overemphasis can mislead the teachers solely to depend on the syllabus of the subject. Glatthorn et al. (2006) is aware of the problem and he says that an overemphasis on the use of a syllabus as the sole foundation of curriculum is a dependence on content as well as an overdependence on a particular way of organizing a body of knowledge, content, and/or subjects (p. 91). Moreover, there is a potential risk of overemphasis on the use of syllabi; the teacher as the actor of implementation of the policy can take the syllabus of the subject literally and enact it as the only way of organising the knowledge, and treat the goal of education as information feeding so that students can pass the exam, which kills both teachers’ and students’ interest, creativity and innovation.

The second finding is that curriculum reform changes the focus of teaching and learning English as a second language. The reason for this change is firstly because of internationalisation. Internationalisation clearly is stated written in Gy 11 that:

The internationalisation of Swedish society and increasing cross-border mobility place high demands on the ability of people to live with and appreciate the values inherent in culture diversity. (Skolverket, 2011, p. 4)

Due to globalisation, English has been widely accepted as a lingua franca in the world. To enable students to move freely across borders, the focus of teaching and learning English as a second language must be communicative competence oriented. When students travel to other countries, they need to use their English to get around. Tornberg (2015) supports this change and writes that language is a means of communication, and language is action and language has content (p. 53). The second reason for the change of English as a second language teaching and learning focus is because of vocationalism. As it states in Gy_11 that knowledge of English increases the individual’s opportunities to participate in different social and cultural context, as well as in global studies and working life (Skolverket, 2011, p. 53). In order to prepare students to compete in the international job market, English teachers must make sure that their students can communicate in English without any difficulty. In other word, the focus of teaching and learning English as a second language has to be communicative competence. As a matter of fact, communicative competence is highlighted in both the European Commission (2008) and Gy 11. To help students develop their communicative competence, accordingly the method of teaching is changed to the communicative approach, which emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of study. Han & Yin (2016) write that curriculum reform in China affects the teaching approach. They say that the implementation of college English curriculum reform in China facilitates the transition from traditional grammar-translation approach to communicative language teaching approach (p. 5). The communicative approach is a powerful tool in the teaching and learning of English as a second language. The approach does not only help students to gain their oral proficiency, but also supports the development of their reading, writing, speaking and listening ability. In addition, Lindberg (2011) proposes dialogue in language learning. She believes that dialogue empowers students to interact with each other to create meaning and facilitate learning.
A problem with the change of the focus of teaching and learning English as a second language to communicative competence can make the teacher unconsciously tunes down the importance of the grammar. In language learning, reading and writing are equally important as speaking and listening. Therefore it is important for students to develop their all-round communicative skills. In addition the aim of the English subject is that:

Students should be given the opportunity, through the use of language in functional and meaningful contexts, to develop all-round communicative skills. These skills cover both reception, which means understanding spoken language and texts and production and interaction, which means expression oneself and interacting with others in speech and writing. (Skolverket, 2011, p. 53)

The third finding is that curriculum reform changes the dynamic of the classroom. By interviewing six upper secondary teachers in English as a second language Lindahl (2015) points out that students’ influence has been an important part in the teaching. Lpf 94 says that the teacher should plan and evaluate the teaching with students, and ultimately the teacher should gain certain influence from students on their teaching, teaching method and teaching content (p. 23). Such influence from students is also stated in Gy 2011. When students’ influence is invited in the classroom, the dynamic of the classroom would certainly be changed. In fact, the teacher is not the only dynamic in the classroom any longer. The power structure between the teacher and students is shifting and balancing. The teacher does not have total control over her or his teaching and students any longer. The students’ role is changed from a passive receiver to an active participant in their learning. The changed role of the students has, in turn, an impact on the change of the teacher’s role. In Han and Yin’s (2016) words, “the innovated teaching requires teachers to become an organiser, facilitator and instructor for students’ learning rather than dominator and controller for traditional teaching” p. 6). The teacher is not the only source of knowledge any more. In the English language classroom, the teacher and students are each other’s language partners, and they interact with each other and carry out conversation and dialogues. Tornberg (2015) points out that the function of language should be in focus when one tries to learn a language (p. 53). As a matter of fact students are thought to learn the target language better though interaction with one another and the teacher. (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 90) The change of the dynamic of the classroom grants students to have some space to allow the spirit of creativity and innovation. Thus, students’ pre-existing knowledge and experience should be welcomed in the classroom.

6.2 Limitations
The results of the study provide an interesting starting point for further researcher on curriculum reform and second language teaching and learning. However, some limitations to the study need to be noted. One of the limitations is the nature of the study as a systematic literature review. This type of literature review requires that the chosen sources need to be relevant to the study and research questions, which means that an interesting or significant source might go unnoticed. Another limitation is the analysis itself; because the study aims to answer the research questions, thus the analysis sticks to the questions and searches for evidence to support the results wanted by the researcher. The last limitation is the number of sources used in the analysis. For the study, seven research articles or theses are used, and although the results show some patterns, it cannot be claimed that they can be generalized.

6.3 Conclusion
This paper has analyzed seven sources in relation to curriculum reform, second language learning and teaching, and English as a second language in particular. The main finding is that
curriculum reform affects second language learning and teaching. Taking English as a second language teaching and learning as example, the subject syllabus is gaining a more and more important position. A detailed and concrete syllabus can help effectively transmit a body of knowledge to students. With a concrete syllabus in hand English teachers have guideline to follow when planning their class, in addition students also have clear idea about the knowledge that they shall learn under the school year. The second finding is that curriculum reform highlights communicative competence, and thus the teaching and learning. Communicative competence has become an ultimate goal for second language learning. Teachers should provide students opportunities to interact with themselves and with each other as much as possible to gain communicative competence. Furthermore, one more finding in relation to curriculum reform and second language teaching and learning is that the dynamic of the second language classroom is changed. The teacher is not the only authority in the classroom. The power structure between the teacher and students is shifting and balancing. The teacher does not have total control over her or his teaching and students.

6.4 Future studies
The findings of this literature review show that curriculum reform affects second language teaching and learning in several ways, such as syllabus has become more and more important. In second language acquisition syllabus does have an important role to play, for example, the syllabus can help teachers to plan their class and guide students to learn. It could be interesting to see in what way the syllabus is used in the actual English as a second language classroom. Another interesting finding is that communicative competence has become the focus of teaching and learning English as a second language. It can be rewarding to do further empirical research to find out if it is true. If it is true, what do English teachers do to help their students to gain all-around communicative skills? The methods that teachers use to help their students to gain all-around communicative skills can definitely be beneficial to the other learners of English as second language as well.
References


