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Target language use

An empirical study of the target language use in the Swedish 4-6 grade classroom

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Abstract

A consistent use of the target language during English lessons is beneficial for pupils’ linguistic development, but also challenging for both teachers and pupils. The main purpose for pupils to learn English is to be able to use it in communication, which requires that they develop the ability to comprehend input, produce output and use language strategies. Several researchers claim that a consistent use of the target language is necessary in order to develop these abilities. Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the target language use during English lessons in Swedish grades 4-6, and what pupils’ opinions regarding target language use are. The methods used to collect data consisted of a pupil questionnaire with 42 respondents and an observation of two teachers’ English lessons during a week’s time. The results from the observations show that the teachers use plenty of target language during lessons, but the first language as well to explain things that pupils might experience difficult to understand otherwise. The results from the questionnaire mainly show that the pupils seem to enjoy English and like to both speak and hear the target language during lessons. The main input comes from listening to a CD with dialogues and exercises in the textbook and the workbook, and from the teacher speaking. The results also show that a majority of the pupils use the target language in their spare time. A conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that the TL should be used to a large extent in order to support pupils’ linguistic development. However, teachers may sometimes need to use L1 in order to facilitate understanding of the things that many pupils find difficult, for example grammar. Suggestions for further research in this area include similar studies conducted on a larger scale.

Keywords: Target language, L2 learners, upper elementary level, pupils’ opinions.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. 1
  1.1 AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS ........................................................................... 2

2 BACKGROUND .................................................................................................................... 2
  2.1 EXPECTATIONS OF AN ENGLISH TEACHER ....................................................... 2
  2.2 BENEFICIAL AND STIMULATING USE OF THE TARGET LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM ................................................................. 3
  2.3 CHALLENGES WITH THE USE OF THE TARGET LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM ................................................................. 4

3 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ....................................................................................... 5
  3.1 SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY ...................................................................................... 5
  3.2 SCAFFOLDING............................................................................................................ 5

4 MATERIALS AND METHOD ............................................................................................. 6
  4.1 DESIGN ...................................................................................................................... 6
  4.2 PILOT STUDY ............................................................................................................. 7
    4.2.1 Questionnaire ...................................................................................................... 7
    4.2.2 Observation ......................................................................................................... 7
  4.3 SELECTION CRITERIA/STRATEGIES ......................................................................... 8
  4.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ..................................................................................... 8
  4.5 DATA ANALYSIS ....................................................................................................... 9
  4.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY .................................................................................. 10

5 RESULTS ............................................................................................................................ 11
  5.1 OBSERVATION OF THE TL AND L1 USE DURING LESSONS ................................ 11
    5.1.1 Participants in the observation ........................................................................ 11
    5.1.2 Results from the observation .......................................................................... 11
  5.2 RESULTS FROM THE SURVEY STUDY .................................................................. 14
    5.2.1 General information of the participating pupils and their opinions .............. 14
    5.2.2 TL use in the English lessons ......................................................................... 18
    5.2.3 Working methods and TL use during English lessons .................................. 20

6 DISCUSSION ..................................................................................................................... 23
  6.1 MAIN FINDINGS ....................................................................................................... 23
  6.2 LIMITATIONS AND METHODOLOGY DISCUSSION ............................................. 25

7 CONCLUSION .................................................................................................................. 26
  7.1 FURTHER RESEARCH ............................................................................................ 27

REFERENCES ....................................................................................................................... 28

APPENDIX 1: PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRE ............................................................................. 30
APPENDIX 2: OBSERVATION PROTOCOL ..................................................................... 32
APPENDIX 3: PARENTS’ CONSENT LETTER .................................................................... 33
APPENDIX 4: PUPILS’ CONSENT LETTER ....................................................................... 34
APPENDIX 5: TEACHERS’ CONSENT LETTER ................................................................ 35
LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: PARTICIPANTS IN THE PUPIL SURVEY STUDY ................................................................. 14

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: TEACHERS’ LANGUAGE USE ............................................................................................. 11
FIGURE 2: GRADE 4 - TEACHER’S TL USE ..................................................................................... 12
FIGURE 4: GRADE 5 - TEACHER’S TL USE ..................................................................................... 13
FIGURE 5: GRADE 5 - TEACHER’S L1 USE ..................................................................................... 14
FIGURE 6: PUPILS’ OPINION ON THE ENGLISH SUBJECT AND EXERCISES IN LESSONS (ALL PUPILS).................................................................................................................... 15
FIGURE 7: DIFFICULTY LEVEL OF LESSONS (ALL PUPILS) ............................................................. 15
FIGURE 8: IF PUPILS BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE TAUGHT HOW TO PUT NEW WORDS IN SENTENCES AND HOW TO PRONOUNCE THEM (ALL PUPILS) .............................................................. 16
FIGURE 9: SPARE-TIME INTERESTS WHERE THE TL IS USED (ALL PUPILS) .................................. 16
FIGURE 10: USE OF SCHOOL-ENGLISH IN SCHOOL IN SPARE-TIME (ALL PUPILS) ...................... 17
FIGURE 11: AMOUNT OF TEACHERS’ TL USE DURING ENGLISH LESSONS ............................... 18
FIGURE 12: TARGET LANGUAGE INPUT IN ENGLISH LESSONS (NUMBER OF ALL PUPILS RESPONDING TO EACH CATEGORY) .................................................................................................. 18
FIGURE 13: HOW OFTEN PUPILS SPEAK DURING LESSONS ............................................................ 19
FIGURE 15: PAIR WORK AND GROUP WORK (ALL PUPILS) ............................................................. 21
FIGURE 16: HOW PUPILS EXPERIENCE THAT THEY LEARN BEST (ALL PUPILS) ....................... 21
FIGURE 17: USE OF THE TL WHEN WORKING IN PAIRS OR GROUPS (ALL PUPILS) .................... 22
FIGURE 18: TEACHER ENCOURAGING THE PUPILS TO USE THE TARGET LANGUAGE DURING PAIR AND GROUP WORK (ALL PUPILS) ................................................................. 22
1 Introduction

The main purpose for pupils to learn English in school is to be able to use English in communication with other people, according to what is stated in the Swedish curriculum for the elementary school (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2011, p. 30). That includes the ability to produce output, for example to be able to speak and write in English so that other people can understand. Furthermore, pupils’ need the ability to comprehend input, for example, what other people say or write. In order to develop these abilities, pupils need plenty of opportunities to participate in communicative tasks where the focus is on using the target language and where they are stimulated, motivated, and challenged according to their individual skill levels and needs (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2011, pp. 8-9).

According to Lundberg (2007, pp. 82-83), Swedish pupils often begin to learn English in year three but there is a variation between year one and four. Some schools even have the ambition to begin teaching English in pre-school. Unfortunately, a common explanation to why pupils should start learning English in year three is that material and books are available then and not before. Another frequent and general opinion to why English education should wait is that there should be a focus on mathematics and Swedish, and mainly that pupils should learn how to read and write in Swedish before they learn another language (Lundberg, 2007, p. 82-83). Furthermore, it is evident that it does not matter to a great extent when the English education begins. On the other hand, it is quite common that the teaching in year three often is carried out at a basic level regardless of pupils’ present English language skills. This together with a lack of proper planning by teachers, and lack of increased and an individually adapted difficulty level have led to a decreased interest in the English subject by pupils as early as in years 4-6. Moreover, most of what is taught is based on a textbook, a workbook, and weekly vocabulary lists to learn (Lundberg, 2007, pp. 84-85).

Lundberg’s (2007, p. 86-87) study shows that pupils are often passive during lessons and too insecure or too comfortable to produce output, and are for the most part exposed to a larger extent to Swedish than English during English lessons. A more recent article by Leffler and Lundberg (2012) expand on Lundberg’s previous research. In order to become successful as English learners, Leffler and Lundberg (2012, p. 5) insist that pupils have to be motivated in order to take an active part in their own learning and encouraged to dare to speak English, both individually and together with their classmates in various kinds of exercises. English teaching has to feel meaningful to the pupils as well, and it is therefore necessary to connect the English teaching to the outside world at times. The Storyline approach and communication with pupils in other schools are examples that the researchers mention as elements that could work motivationally for pupils to learn English (Leffler & Lundberg, 2012, pp. 5-6).

This thesis is based on a literature study on the same topic, which was conducted by this author (Rosenquist, 2015). The conclusion from that study is that a consistent use of the target language during English lessons has a positive effect on for example pupils’ vocabulary, pronunciation, and language strategies. However, the results showed that there were also challenges with using the target language consistently. Lesson planning, creating motivating tasks, and differences in pupils’ language skills were some of the examples that were mentioned in the articles as challenges. Unfortunately, none of the research articles that were included in the literature study were based on research conducted in Sweden, but could probably be applicable to the Swedish context to some extent. However, this thesis is an

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1 Target language is the language the pupils are supposed to learn. In this thesis, when the phrase “target language” is used, it means English.
empirical study where data from Swedish lower elementary classes have been collected, and the results from the findings in this study will be compared to the results from the literature study.

1.1 Aim and research questions

The aim of this empirical study is to examine the use of the target language in English lessons for Swedish upper elementary classes and compare those findings to what pupils’ opinions are on target language use from both teachers and themselves. The following research questions will be used to specify the aim of this thesis:

- How and when do pupils receive target-language input during English lessons?
- What are pupils’ opinions on using the target language during English lessons?

2 Background

In this section, relevant background information from the curriculum, literature and previous research is presented in order to work as a foundation for the discussion of the results of this thesis.

2.1 Expectations of an English teacher

The overall purpose for pupils to learn English is to be able to use it in communication with other people. When teachers plan for English lessons they need to have both the aim and the core content in the curriculum in mind. In the curriculum (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2011, p. 30) it is stated that the pupils are supposed to develop the ability to be able to understand spoken and written English, and be able to express themselves in speech and writing. They are supposed to develop language strategies useful for different situations in which they need to make themselves understood for instance when they do not know certain words or need to explain something differently. Furthermore, they are supposed to develop strategies to be able to adapt their speech depending on whom they speak to or in different contexts.

Pupils need plenty of both input and output exercises to develop proper language abilities. A rich amount of input is good for pupils’ vocabulary, knowledge in sentence structure, and for their pronunciation of English words. Pronunciation is something that pupils need to start practicing as early as possible since it is easier for younger pupils to develop a good pronunciation technique. What is more, oral input and output exercises should be emphasized since younger pupils naturally are not very good readers and those kinds of activities are both easier for them and at the same time a good way of learning English (Lundberg, 2010, p. 19; Pinter, 2006, pp. 45-46).

In order to be able to teach pupils properly teachers need both sufficient language skills and language strategies that they can pass on to the pupils. Having a good learning environment is important too, and something that teachers need to create and uphold if they want their pupils to feel safe enough to dare to speak in front of their classmates. That in turn helps pupils to develop self-confidence and a belief in their ability to use English (Lundberg, 2010, pp. 25-26). Furthermore, teachers need to be observant of differences in pupils’ language skills, especially the pupils in need of more support, and adapt the difficulty level of activities to each pupil’s skill level as much as possible (Pinter, 2006, p. 45).
2.2 Beneficial and stimulating use of the target language in the classroom

Several researchers claim that it is important for pupils’ linguistic development to provide them with plenty of quality target language input (Bateman, 2008; Beckman Anthony, 2008; Chambers, 2013; Sesek, 2005; Wyatt, 2009). Some even insist that plenty of target language input is crucial for pupils to develop a good speaking ability. Likewise, pupils need opportunities to produce output with varied activities that they find stimulating and meaningful. There are several examples of important language skills that benefit from target language use. Those that are mainly emphasized are pronunciation, vocabulary, sentence structure, and language strategies for understanding and speaking (Bateman, 2008; Beckman Anthony, 2008; Chambers, 2013; Sesek, 2005; Wyatt, 2009).

Even though Beckham Anthony (2008) and Bateman (2008) both insist that pupils need plenty of target language input, they do not believe that it is enough to provide that if it is not comprehensive as well, and therefore they refer to Krashen (2009) and his theory of comprehensible input. According to Krashen (2009, p. 63-64) comprehensible input means oral input that is understandable for someone, a pupil for instance. What is understandable is individual and depends on previous knowledge and language skills. Without any previous knowledge in a language, it is most likely that nothing is comprehensible if there is not someone there to adapt the input to a comprehensible level. This is something that Krashen (2009) emphasizes as a difference between someone who is a language teacher and someone who is not. Only when input is comprehensible is it positive for pupils’ linguistic development (Bateman, 2008; Beckman Anthony, 2008).

The meaningfulness of an activity depends on how pupils are allowed to work with it. For instance, if an activity is very challenging and the pupils are allowed an opportunity to feel their way with the language, it is more likely that the pupils become interested in using the language (Beckman Anthony, 2008; Chambers, 2013; Wyatt, 2009). In addition, if teachers let pupils speak without correcting them all the time there is an improved chance for the pupils to be relaxed and dare to speak at all than if they know that they are always going to be corrected. For some pupils, being corrected could make them feel embarrassed as well, and therefore, that can be another reason for them to avoid speaking (Wyatt, 2009).

Lessons where pupils work together in pairs or groups are beneficial for pupils’ development and good for their motivation to use the target language, according to Beckman Anthony (2008) and Wyatt (2009). For instance, when working together, pupils seems to be more motivated to work when they can discuss and solve problems together, and learn new things. Working in pairs or groups is especially good since pupils can scaffold each other in activities and thereby instantly support each other’s development and language learning (Beckman Anthony, 2008).

Another successful classroom activity is to let pupils bring their spare time activities into the English lessons, which is a good way to stimulate and make the pupils more motivated to learn and to use the target language (Beckham Anthony 2008). Vocabulary learning is for example an area that could be connected to pupils’ interests, emotions, and social life (Wyatt 2009).

Teachers who consistently use the target language during English lessons tend to be more successful according to Bateman (2008). Pupils seem to benefit from a consistent use of the
target language and improve their language skills more and faster than pupils that do not have a teacher that uses the target language consistently. Using the target language to a large extent demands more careful planning and is more time consuming, but at the same time, helps those teachers to improve their planning skills, and leads to better English lessons overall (Bateman, 2008). Furthermore, teachers who consistently use the target language indirectly get more respect from their pupils and often the pupils believe more in themselves. This is because that their teacher has much faith in them and high expectations since the teacher mainly uses English and not their first language (Bateman 2008).

In this section, several benefits from a consistent use of the target language have been mentioned, but there have been examples of challenges accompanying those benefits as well, for instance that the demands on the teacher increase regarding planning. This leads into the next section, which will focus on the area of challenges.

2.3 Challenges with the use of the target language in the classroom

An English lesson where a consistent use of the target language is the aim is a challenging task for a teacher and demands a more careful lesson planning according to Beckman Anthony (2008), Chambers (2013) and Wyatt (2009). There are for example more things to keep in mind while planning. For instance, if a teacher decides to go beyond the common way of teaching with a textbook, a workbook and weekly word lists to learn, which pupils often find quite uninteresting, planning and creating a more varied set of activities that the pupils find interesting, stimulating, and motivating means both an increased workload as well as an increased challenge. If the target language is supposed to be consistently used as well, the challenge and the workload increase even more (Beckman Anthony, 2008; Chambers, 2013; Wyatt, 2009).

The classroom environment is another challenging area and very important to work with. According to Beckman Anthony (2008) and Chambers (2013), creating a safe and tolerant classroom environment where all pupils, no matter skill level, can learn and develop is basic and important. All pupils are supposed to be able to improve as much as possible and receive proper support in order to develop enough self-confidence to dare to speak English in the classroom and in front of their classmates. If a safe learning environment is not achieved, there is a chance that some of the pupils will never develop the needed confidence to produce output. That could leave those pupils with a feeling of being left out from the rest of the class and certainly not improve their self-confidence (Beckman Anthony, 2008; Chambers, 2013).

One of the most challenging tasks for a teacher is to make sure that all pupils comprehend what is said according to Bateman (2008), Beckman Anthony (2008), Chambers (2013) and Sesek (2005). One area where this challenge occurs is during vocabulary learning, where a teacher has to make sure that all pupils understand new words and how to put the words in sentences (Beckman Anthony, 2008). Grammar is another difficult area that usually needs plenty of explaining and where many teachers use the pupils’ first language instead of the target language when explaining (Bateman, 2008; Chambers, 2013). Lastly, an area where it is common for teachers to use the pupils’ first language is when they want to maintain a calm learning environment or need to manage discipline (Bateman, 2008; Sesek, 2005).

A consistent use of English during lessons could be challenging for teachers as well for pupils according to Bateman (2008) and Chambers (2013). Just as a pupil could suffer from low self-confidence or a poor set of language skills, a teacher can as well. The pressure and stress that could come from the extra amount of time that it takes to plan for English lessons with a
consistent use of English and all that should be included from the curriculum, are challenging factors to keep in mind too (Bateman, 2008; Chambers, 2013).

3 Theoretical perspectives

In this section, the theoretical perspectives that this thesis is based on are presented. The theories that are of interest for this thesis are the sociocultural theory and scaffolding. The sociocultural theory originates from Lev Vygotsky (1978) and his idea of the Zone of Proximal Development, where he claims that pupils learn best. Scaffolding is an expansion of the sociocultural theory, based on an idea that Bruner (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976) had on how to best provide support for pupils’ learning and development in school.

3.1 Sociocultural theory

Once we are born, a continuous and never-ending learning process throughout our lives begins. During the first few years before starting school, learning is mostly achieved by observation and imitation of other people around us, most likely our parents, siblings, other relatives, preschool teachers and friends, or by asking questions about how different things work. This kind of learning is called “non-systematic learning” (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 84-85).

When we reach the appropriate age and begin school, our way of learning things changes from non-systematic learning into “systematic learning” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 85). The difference is that the learning process from now on and many years ahead is led by teachers and supported by classmates. Still, the most important aspect in the sociocultural theory is not the systematic learning; it is when pupils’ learn in the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 85), which constitutes the very core of the sociocultural theory.

According to Vygotsky (1978, p. 86), to learn in the zone of proximal development means that when a pupil is close to learning something new, he or she receives help and support to achieve that knowledge from someone who already possesses it, and by that an optimal learning environment is created. The one who helps and supports the pupil to learn the new thing could be both a teacher and another pupil, as long as it is someone who possesses what is about to be learned.

Being in the zone of proximal development is the best and easiest way to learn new things, but it requires support from someone else. Without support, Vygotsky (1978, p. 86) states that a pupil instead remains in something he calls “the actual development level”. That means that the pupil is on his or her actual knowledge level, trying to learn something new, but does not have the help and support that is necessary to achieve the new knowledge without much more effort. Vygotsky (1978) claims that it is much more difficult to learn from this perspective than the one with proper support and where pupils are in the zone of proximal development.

3.2 Scaffolding

As mentioned in the introduction of this section, scaffolding is an expansion of the sociocultural theory and was first mentioned in an article written and published in 1976 by Wood, Bruner and Ross (p. 90). Although scaffolding is an expansion, the basic core with the zone of proximal development is still the same, which is the idea of someone more competent, a teacher or a pupil, helping someone in the zone of proximal development to learn something they are very close to doing. The aim and focus in this expansion of the sociocultural theory is that pupils should focus on learning things that are within their reach and more specifically, in their zone of proximal development the entire time (Wood et al., 1976, p. 90).
According to Säljö (2010), it is important for a teacher to develop a proper understanding for the skill levels of his/her pupils, what they need to improve and what kind of support they need to do that. The latter is something that needs to be considered carefully, since a teacher’s workload needs to be appropriate. Even though a teacher is supposed to scaffold his/her pupils, the teacher is not supposed to do the work for the pupil. A teacher should give the pupils the final push when they are close to learn something new, something that is in their zone of proximal development (Säljö, 2010, p. 192).

4 Materials and method
In this section, the materials and methods used to collect empirical data are shown and discussed. The section is divided into seven smaller sections consisting of: design, pilot study, selection criteria/strategies, ethical considerations, procedure, data analysis, and reliability and validity.

4.1 Design
The aim of this study is to examine the use of the target language in Swedish grade 4-6 classes and compare those findings to pupils’ opinions of their teachers and their own use of the target language. The following research questions are used to specify the aim:

- How and when do pupils receive target-language input during English lessons?
- What are pupils’ opinions on using the target language during English lessons?

According to Eliasson (2013, p. 21) a researcher can use different methods to collect data, or combine several methods, which is called “triangulation” (p. 31). This is useful when a researcher wants to see things from different angles, and have a broader perspective on a particular matter. That is also why the combination of one qualitative method and one quantitative method was chosen for this study. The results from the collected data are presented with both numbers and in writing.

Two methods were chosen for this study. Firstly, observations were used to study two teachers’ lessons. Each teacher was observed during three lessons. Secondly, a questionnaire was used to collect data from the observed teachers’ pupils. When an observation is carried out, it is important to be prepared and to continuously write down notes in order to collect and remember what has been observed (Larsen, 2009, pp. 93-94). An observation protocol with specific and pre-decided variables to observe is preferable, and was used in this study (see Appendix 2). The observation was carried out as a passive participant observation (Larsen, 2009, p. 90), which means that the observer tries to collect data without intervening in the ongoing activities. Furthermore, it is important not to give away too much information about what is going to be observed since people could act differently then (Larsen, 2009, pp. 92). Instead, the observer should give some general information about the purpose of the observations.

The pupil questionnaire contained both closed and open-ended questions (see Appendix 1). According to Eliasson (2013, pp. 36-37), there are both benefits and downsides with both types. Closed questions are good to use since they facilitate the data analysis. The data will most certainly be relevant for the study since the researcher has chosen the answers, and respondents tend to prefer those kinds of questions since they are easy to answer. The downside is that the respondent might prefer to answer differently than the alternatives given, and therefore it is recommended to use the alternative “other” (Eliasson, 2013, p. 37). On open-ended questions, the respondent could answer whatever they want, which is beneficial if
the researcher wants to know more about a particular thing. The downside is that these data often demand more work regarding analysis and compilation (Eliasson, 2013, p. 36). This is why this author chose to only use a few open-ended questions, and only when it regarded some interesting phenomena that could be relevant for the research questions. One example of an open-ended question in the pupil questionnaire was why some pupils do not dare to speak the target language in front of their classmates.

4.2 Pilot study

4.2.1 Questionnaire

There are many reasons for why a questionnaire needs to be tested and evaluated in a pilot study before it is used in the real research. Even though plenty of time and effort have been put into making a questionnaire as good as possible, there are often things that need to be improved. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 341), the main reason for conducting a pilot study is to ensure the study’s reliability and validity, and to inquire that the questionnaire’s layout is properly designed. Furthermore, it is important that the questions and the possible responses belonging to them are all adapted and formulated in such a way that those who are supposed to do the survey can easily understand the questions and the responses (Eliasson, 2013, p. 39-40). Besides that, there is a possibility that some participants could have other important thoughts or improvements in mind and therefore Eliasson (2013, p. 44) states that it is a good idea to ask the participants of the pilot study to leave their opinions and possible suggestions on how to improve the questionnaire.

The pilot study of the questionnaire was conducted in a grade four and had 13 participants. Normally, there are more pupils present but that day several pupils were absent for different reasons. The author was present during the pilot study the entire time and had informed the pupils that they could raise their hand if they had any questions about the content of the questionnaire. Some pupils wondered about question eight since they thought the responses on the second row were too far apart from the first response row, and therefore were not sure if the responses belonged to the same question. On the other hand, no pupil seemed to have any trouble understanding anything in the questionnaire and no comments regarding the questionnaire in general were left on the last page either, where room had been given to leave comments about the layout, the questions and the responses, or anything else they could think of. Besides some positive comments, there was only one inquiry about question 13 regarding whether it would not be better to be able to choose several responses instead of only one. After some careful consideration, the responses in question eight were moved closer together in order to facilitate understanding. No further changes were made and the version used in the study can be seen in Appendix 1.

4.2.2 Observation

An observation could be based on open and closed categories, themes, minute-to-minute observation, and observation of almost everything (Björndal, 2005, p. 51). The observation protocol used in this observation study of six English lessons is a mixture of different observation procedures. The main purpose in this observation was to observe the minute-to-minute use of the target language and the first language. Furthermore, the aim was to note when and for what the target language was used or not used, and how the pupils responded to the target language use. In order to be able to note all those different things, the observation protocol had to contain more open categories and themes as well besides the minute-to-minute category.
In order to make it as easy as possible to make notes, the situation part was divided into a number of categories, for instance: explanations, vocabulary, reading and so on. Unfortunately, there was no time to try out the observation protocol before the actual observation study began, even though it is highly recommended to do that before a study is conducted (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 399). Therefore, it was decided to make adjustments during the first two observations instead if it was found necessary. Already during the first observed lesson, three additional categories had to be added. One of them was “dialogue”. It has nothing to do with the teacher’s use of the target language but it is a target language input for the pupils and was the first thing they listened to that lesson. The category “question” was divided into two categories instead of one, with one for the teacher and one for the pupils since it could be interesting to see the differences between the teachers’ and the pupils’ choice of language when asking a question. No further changes were made to the observation protocol besides the ones mentioned above, and the last edition can be seen in Appendix 2.

4.3 Selection criteria/strategies

The aim of this thesis is to search for answers to how and when teachers and pupils in grades 4-6 use English during English lessons and what pupils’ opinions are on the use of the target language. Therefore, the author wanted to conduct both the observation and the survey in classes within that age group and with teachers who were certified or who had experience of teaching English in grades 4-6. The reason was to measure what the study intended, and to make the research as valid as possible, which are two important elements in a study (Eliasson, 2013, p. 16). Furthermore, the pilot study conducted before the actual study had to meet with the same requirements since the author wanted to make adjustments on the questionnaire according to feedback from the relevant age group and their language skills, and adjustments on the observation protocol based on English lessons in the relevant age group.

In order to find suitable informants e-mails were sent to principals of two schools with a presentation of the study, a description of the requirements mentioned above, and an inquiry of the possibility of conducting the study in their schools. Both principals responded and presented three suitable classes and teachers fitting the requirements. They consisted of two grade four classes and one grade five. Thereafter each pupil and teacher in those classes received an information and consent letter in which they could decide if they wanted to participate or not by putting a mark in a yes or a no box. 55 pupils decided to participate in the actual survey study and the survey pilot study. 42 of the pupils from one grade four and one grade five belonging to the same school participated in the actual survey study, and 13 pupils from a grade four in another school participated in the survey pilot study. The same teachers and pupils that participated in the actual survey study participated in the observation study as well.

According to Cohen et al. (2007, p. 101), in a study where the results are going to be presented statistically, it is recommended that the minimum numbers of participants are no less than 30 to maintain at least some reliability. Since this study’s number of informants exceeds the minimum number of recommended participants, and there is a time limit set for this thesis to be finished, no further effort to include more informants was made.

4.4 Ethical considerations

When research is conducted in a school environment, there are several aspects to take into consideration. There are recommendations that a researcher should follow as well in order to maintain a high research standard, and a safe trustful environment for possible participating informants. Both the Swedish Research Council and the Board of Research Ethics at
Högskolan Dalarna have composed such recommendations, which have been followed throughout this research.

First, the Swedish Research Council (2011, pp. 7-14) has four requirements with the purpose of preserving each participating individual’s rights. They deal with (author’s translation): information, consent, confidentiality and usage. In the first requirement it appears that the researcher must inform all participants of the purpose of the study, what they are expected to contribute, and the terms of their participation. They are entitled to know that their participation is voluntary and can be discontinued at any time without questions. From the second requirement, it is evident that the author has to receive participants’ consent and therefore needs to collect those before any study can begin. The third requirement suggests that all participants shall receive confidentiality and thus that all gathered information shall be handled in such a way that no unauthorized person has access to any information about the participants. All collected data during research, must only be used for the stated aim as mandated in the fourth requirement, and must not be used in any other way than what was intended to or shared with someone else for another purpose.

The Board of Research Ethics (2013, pp. 1-2) at Högskolan Dalarna emphasizes the same things as the Swedish Research Council does regarding research. Furthermore, they insist that an information letter needs to be sent or handed out to every participant and if that involves minors, their guardians too. Furthermore, the guardians need to give their consent to let their children participate in the research. In this study, all pupils and their guardians received an information letter, as well as the teachers participating in this study. Written consent was collected from every participant, including guardians and teachers, before the study began. The information and consent letters can be seen in Appendix 3, 4, and 5.

### 4.5 Data analysis

In this study, content analysis was used to summarize, analyze, and systematize all collected data in both the observation and the questionnaire. Before the observation started, the observation protocol was divided into columns with suitable categories in order to facilitate the compilation afterwards. The categories are also those that are used and shown in the observation results section. Content analysis is the most commonly used method when analyzing data according to Larsen (2009, p. 101), and is a good method to use when a researcher wants to find patterns, connections, and differences in collected data. The data from the questionnaire was analyzed with content analysis as well. The difference between the data from the observation and the data from the questionnaire is that the data from the questionnaire was not categorized before the questionnaire was used in the study. All data had to be analyzed and divided into themes afterwards. An overall division was made between data with more general information about the pupils’ attitudes towards English and English use in their spare-time, and the TL use on the English lessons. The results from both the open-ended and the closed questions in the questionnaire will be shown in the results section.

Once the data was divided into suitable themes and categories, pie- and bar charts were created from the data. One table is used as well. According to Cohen et al. (2007, p. 507), using tables instead of charts takes less space in a thesis and shows the same data. Still, charts could be easier to comprehend and are more reader friendly than tables.

The figures used in this thesis have different areas of usefulness. The bar chart is good to use when displaying data divided into categories, proportions, and differences between results, while pie charts are most useful when showing proportions (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 507).
4.6 Reliability and validity

When research is conducted it is important that a certain pattern is followed regarding both the way in which data is collected, and thereafter how that data is presented to ensure the reliability and validity of a study. According to Cohen et al. (2007), it is impossible to achieve a flawless result on any of these but it is important that a researcher endeavours to maximize both (p. 133). Reliability is a measure of how trustworthy the research is, which means that it has to be repeatable, and furthermore that it must be possible to reach almost the same results and conclusions (Eliasson, 2013, p.14). The reliability is also crucial for the validity of a study, which is an indicator of what the research was supposed to measure and how accurate it did measure the investigated area (Eliasson, 2013, p. 16).

In order to maximize reliability and validity in the pupil questionnaire, several aspects were taken into consideration. First, the questions in the questionnaire had to be relevant for the research questions, which Larsen (2009, pp. 40-41) emphasizes as important for the validity of a questionnaire. The questions consisted of both closed and open-ended questions, which mean that some of the questions had predetermined answer categories, some of the questions did not, and the respondent could answer whatever he or she wanted to. According to Larsen (2009, pp. 47-48) there are benefits and disadvantages with both types of categories and therefore she recommends a mixture of them, as it is in this thesis. Unfortunately, answer categories like often, seldom, rarely and so on was used, which is not recommended by Larsen (2009, p. 41). Furthermore, answers like that are open for interpretation, and could lead to less reliability.

The author was present the entire time while the pupils filled in the questionnaire. The ethical aspects were regarded thoroughly, especially the anonymity, but the benefit of being present while the pupils answered the questionnaire was that there were not an issue of getting the questionnaires back, which can be the case when sending questionnaires out to people. According to Hudson and Miller (1997) a larger number of respondents and a higher response rate contributes to the reliability of a research. The anonymity involved with a questionnaire is beneficial as well, as respondents tend to give more honest answers to questionnaire questions than to interview questions (Hudson & Miller, 1997).

A pilot study was performed before the actual study took place as described in section 4.2 Pilot study. The purpose of doing that was to find possible issues in need of change. Hudson and Miller (1997) mention for example things like the length of sentences, complicated words or expressions, and the questions themselves as areas that might be in need of change or improvements to ensure validity and reliability. If the pupils do not understand the questions properly, it could be difficult for them to answer them correctly, which will possibly decrease both the reliability and the validity of the results from the questionnaire.

An observation was conducted as well in order to further investigate the conditions and to compare the answers from the questionnaire with the actual English lessons. This is called triangulation of methods, and is a way to increase reliability and validity of the study (Larsen, 2009, p. 81). Cohen et al. (2007, p. 158) mention some challenges that might occur while observations take place. For instance, those who are being observed could act differently than usual. Those who participate in the observation need to be representative enough to be a part of the observation study. The collected data needs to be put into appropriate categories in a consistent way. The participants in the observation study consisted of the pupils that had participated in the questionnaire and their teachers. Therefore they were considered representative enough and also made it possible to triangulate the methods. The categories in
which the observations were put into were not tested before the actual study took place. Instead it was evaluated and analyzed during the first two lessons that were observed and only minor changes were done to the categories.

5 Results

In this section, the results from the observation study and the survey study are presented in two separate subsections. Each subsection begins with a short presentation of the participants in the study. Furthermore, throughout this section the target language (English) will be referred to as TL and the first language (Swedish) as L1.

5.1 Observation of the TL and L1 use during lessons

5.1.1 Participants in the observation

The results below were collected in an observation study of one English teacher in grade four and one English teacher in grade five. Each teacher was observed during three lessons. The teacher in the grade four is not certificated to teach English, but has several years of experience. The teacher in the grade five is a certified English teacher and has plenty of experience teaching English.

5.1.2 Results from the observation

![Figure 1: Teachers’ language use](image)

As shown in Figure 1, the teachers spoke both English and Swedish during the lessons. The teacher in grade four mostly spoke English during the lessons, while the teacher in grade five mostly spoke Swedish. An English test during the last observed lesson in the grade five had an impact on the distribution of spoken English and Swedish. During the test, the teacher spoke Swedish whenever a pupil needed support or needed to have something explained.
Figure 2: Grade 4 - Teacher’s TL use

Figure 2 shows the fourth grade teacher’s specified use of the TL. From what is shown in the figure it appears that most of the teacher’s TL use was when pupils needed support during exercises. Another common use of the TL was when the teacher asked pupils questions, for instance when a new chapter was introduced or during an exercise in the workbook. More specifically, the teacher could ask the pupils what they saw on a picture or give examples from an exercise in the workbook in order to ensure that all pupils understood what they were supposed to do. The third most common area where the TL was used was when new words were introduced and put into sentences. Finally, the TL was used for dialogues, reading or explanations to individual pupils. The TL was used when either the teacher was reading a dialogue or when pupils were listening to a dialogue from a CD.

Figure 3: Grade 4 - Teacher’s L1 use
Figure 3 shows the fourth grade teacher’s use of the L1. As the table shows, the L1 was mostly used when the teacher supported the pupils during exercises. The second most common use of the L1 was when the teacher read to the pupils, for example a translation of short texts in the textbook. Other areas where the L1 was used was when translating dialogues, giving explanations, clarifying grammar/vocabulary, and giving instructions. No L1 was used to ask the pupils questions.

Figure 4 shows the grade five teacher’s specified TL use. As shown in the table above, the teacher used the TL mostly when new words were introduced and taught how to put in sentences. The TL was used half as much for asking the pupils questions. The TL was also used for giving the pupils instructions and for reading to the pupils. It was rarely used to explain things, and the TL was not used for supporting pupils during exercises or for supporting them during tests.

Figure 4: Grade 5 - Teacher’s TL use
Figure 5 shows the grade five teacher’s specified use of the L1. As the table shows, most L1 was used when new words were introduced and taught how to put into sentences. The second most common area where the L1 was used was to give the pupils instructions and third most was support during tests. In addition, the L1 was used to ask the pupils questions and to support pupils during exercises. The L1 was to some extent used to explain things, and to read to the pupils.

5.2 Results from the survey study

In this section, the results from the pupil survey study are presented. All results were collected with a paper questionnaire, and were thereafter analyzed and divided into suitable themes with a focus on the research questions. The first part presented below gives the reader a general view of the participants, their attitudes toward the English subject, and furthermore their usage of English in their spare time. Thereafter follows a part focusing on the TL use in the English lessons and how the pupils experience that.

5.2.1 General information of the participating pupils and their opinions

Firstly, the results show that the majority of the pupils began learning English in grade one. Quite many pupils answered second grade and pre-school as well, while a few answered grade three. No other grade was mentioned.

Table 1: Participants in the pupil survey study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>No answer</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 1, the participants consist of 18 pupils from grade four and 24 pupils from grade five, with a total of 42 pupils. They consist of 21 boys, 18 girls, and three who did not want to state their gender.
When questioned about what they think of the English subject, the vast majority of all the pupils answered that English is either a fun or a quite fun subject. 19% answered that they find English quite boring or boring, as can be seen in Figure 6. The answers are almost the same when questioned about the exercises performed during the lessons. Most pupils find them either fun or quite fun. The numbers of pupils that experience the exercises as boring or quite boring are almost equal to those who believe that English is a boring or a quite boring subject.

Figure 6: Pupils’ opinion on the English subject and exercises in lessons (all pupils)

Figure 7: Difficulty level of lessons (all pupils)
As shown in Figure 7, 64% of the pupils believe that the difficulty level in the English lessons is either easy or quite easy. In addition, 31% believe that the lessons are neither too easy nor too difficult. Altogether, 95% do not experience the lessons as difficult, while 5% do.

![Words in sentences](image1)

![Pronounce](image2)

Figure 8: If pupils believe that they are taught how to put new words in sentences and how to pronounce them (all pupils)

The results in Figure 8 show that a vast majority of the pupils believe that when they are taught a new word, the teachers show them how to put the new word into a sentence as well as teach them how it is supposed to be pronounced.

![Boys vs Girls](image3)

Figure 9: Spare-time interests where the TL is used (all pupils)
The results presented in Figure 9 show that almost every boy has a spare time interest where English is used. Among the girls, the majority use English in spare time activities but the number of those who do not is much higher compared to the boys. In the column “No answer”, two pupils answered that they have interests where English is used.

In an open-ended question to follow up the question above, the pupils were encouraged to mention in which personal interests they heard, saw or used English themselves, provided that they had answered “Yes” to the previous question about using English in their spare time. Among the boys, 18 out of 20 answered that they met or used English while playing computer games. Watching movies, listening to music, and chatting were other examples mentioned but to a smaller extent. Listening to music and watching movies were the most common interests where the girls met English. Books, chatting, and writing were also mentioned. In the last group computer games and listening to music were mentioned.

Figure 10: Use of school-English in school in spare-time (all pupils)

Figure 10 shows the number of pupils who use the learned school-English in their spare-time interests. Of the 21 boys, 18 answered that the English they learn in school is useful. Even though only 11 out of 18 girls in the previous question answered that they use English in their spare-time interests, 15 answered that the English they learn in school is useful in their spare-time. In the last group, two pupils believed that the school English is useful in their spare-time interests.

This question was also followed up by an open-ended question, and the purpose was to find out in which spare-time interests the pupils found the learned school English useful. The answers were similar to those in the previous open-ended question, and once again, the majority of the boys answered computer games. Like in the previous question chatting, watching movies, and listening to music were also quite common areas. The most common answers from the girls were: on holidays, understanding texts and speech, and writing. For the pupils who did not want to disclose their sex, holidays were mentioned.
5.2.2 TL use in the English lessons

When the pupils were asked about how much TL they experienced that their teachers spoke during English lessons they answered as following:

![Graph showing TL use in English lessons for Grade 4 and Grade 5](image)

As Figure 11 shows, the majority of the pupils in both grade four and grade five experience that the teachers speak plenty of TL during the English lessons. In grade four, 13 out of 18 pupils answer that the teacher speaks TL either “All the time” or “Mostly”. In grade five, two pupils answer “All the time” and 14 answer “Mostly”.

![Graph showing target language input in English lessons](image)

Figure 12: Target language input in English lessons (number of all pupils responding to each category)
Even though it seems like the teachers use plenty of TL, they do not make up the largest TL input according to the results in Figure 12. Instead, it is shown that almost all pupils experience that “Dialogue & Exercise” constitutes the largest TL input, and the teachers speaking TL the second largest. Other TL input mentioned are for instance classmates, short films, and the teacher reading.

The third most common TL input and that which was mentioned by almost half of the pupils were listening to classmates speaking and reading aloud. When asked about how much they speak during lessons the pupils answered as following:

![Bar chart showing how often pupils speak during lessons for Grades 4 and 5.](image)

**Figure 13: How often pupils speak during lessons**

As can be seen in Figure 13, most of the pupils in grade 4 answer that they “Always”, “Often” or “Sometimes” speak English during lessons. Only two pupils answer “Rarely” or “Never”. In grade 5 the most common answers are “Often” or “Sometimes”.
The next question to the pupils was if they dared to speak English in front of their classmates. As shown in Figure 14, half of the pupils in grade 4 answered that they dare to speak in front of the others. In grade 5, the number of pupils who dared to speak in front of the others was even higher. For the pupils answering “Sometimes” the results are almost the same for both classes, while the results for those who do not dare to speak in front of the others stand out for the pupils in grade 4.

In an open-ended question to follow up why some of the pupils do not dare to speak English in front of the others, the most common answer from the pupils in grade 4 was that they are afraid of saying something wrong. One pupil even mentioned that he/she was afraid that the classmates would laugh. In grade 5, the most common answers were that they did not dare to speak since they could say something wrong. One pupil mentioned stage fright, and one answered that it is scary to speak in front of the classmates.

5.2.3 Working methods and TL use during English lessons

In the next two questions, the pupils were asked if they work in pairs or groups during the lessons, and also how they experience that they learn best.
Figure 15: Pair work and group work (all pupils)

As shown in Figure 15, the results indicate that the pupils do not believe it is very common for them to work in either pairs or groups. It seems though that pair work is a more frequently used method of working than group work.

Figure 16: How pupils experience that they learn best (all pupils)

Even though the answers in the previous question lean toward that it is not very common to work in pairs, the results in Figure 16 show that the majority of the pupils believe that it is the best way for them to learn. Still, 19 of the 42 pupils mention another way of learning as the best for them. In the next question, the pupils were asked about the TL use during pair work and group work, and the pupils’ answers were the following:
The results in Figure 17 show that approximately half of the pupils mostly speak English when they work in pairs or groups, while the other half tend to speak both the TL and L1. In the next question the pupils were asked if they experienced that the teachers encouraged them to speak English during pair work and group work.

The results in Figure 18 show that more than half of the pupils experience that the teachers encourage them to use the TL while working in pairs or groups. 14 of the pupils only experience that sometimes, and four pupils rarely or never experience that.
6 Discussion

This section contains discussions of the main findings, and of the limitations and methodologies used in this thesis. The main findings discussion is based on the content from the section background, theoretical perspectives, and results. Throughout this section, target language (English) will be referred to as TL, and the first language (Swedish) as L1.

This thesis, and the discussion section is based on the following research questions:

- How and when do pupils receive target-language input during English lessons?
- What are pupils’ opinions on using the target language during English lessons?

6.1 Main findings

A majority of the participating pupils in this study seem to have a positive attitude towards the English subject, and the tasks provided by the teachers during English lessons. Teachers have an important and in many ways a crucial role for pupils’ interest in learning a language, and for their language learning. The teacher is expected to support the pupils in learning how to communicate with other people, which includes being able to produce written and oral output, and to understand written and oral input (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2011, p. 30). In order to do that, pupils need to learn new vocabulary, to learn how to pronounce words correctly, and to learn how to use language strategies whenever they are needed (p. 30). It is challenging for teachers to succeed in all those areas (Bateman, 2008; Beckman Anthony, 2008; Chambers, 2013; Sesek, 2005), but for instance, the majority of the pupils in this study believe that the teachers do teach them both how to put new words in sentences and how to pronounce them.

What is interesting regarding the pupils’ opinions on the English lessons is that more than half of the pupils find the difficulty level of them to be fairly easy. Only 5% answered that the difficulty level is rather hard. Pinter (2006, p. 45) emphasizes the importance of an observant teacher, and the need for the teacher to adjust the difficulty level to each and every pupil’s skill level, especially for the pupils in need of extra support. Clearly, there is a need for the teachers in this study to look into that, both for the pupils in need of extra support and for those who could use more of a challenge. This is connected to Vygotsky (1978) and his theory of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) as well. As previously stated, being in the ZPD means that a pupil is on an optimal difficulty level where he/she is close to learning something new with support from someone else (p. 86). Therefore, it is important for the pupils’ learning that the teachers create the right conditions for learning, in this particular matter an optimized difficulty level for each individual pupil.

From the pupil questionnaire, it was apparent that the pupils experienced that their teachers speak plenty of TL during English lessons. That was also confirmed by the observations conducted in both classes, although a test in the grade five had an effect on the results. Even though the teachers did not consistently speak English during the lessons, it is positive that they seem to speak the TL as much as possible since plenty of TL input is important for pupils’ language development and beneficial for several language abilities (Bateman, 2008; Beckman Anthony, 2008; Chambers, 2013; Sesek, 2005; Wyatt, 2009). Language abilities that are particularly likely to develop with more TL use in the classroom are pronunciation, knowledge of sentence structure, language strategies for understanding and speaking, and an increased vocabulary (Bateman, 2008; Beckman Anthony, 2008; Chambers, 2013; Lundberg,
Bateman (2008) also shows that teachers who use plenty of TL during lessons tend to be more successful as language teachers. Furthermore, pupils’ self-belief tends to increase since they experience that the teacher believes in them, and have high expectations since they use the TL much and not the L1 (Bateman, 2008).

Using the TL consistently may not always be positive. Krashen (2009, pp. 63-64) emphasizes that input needs to be comprehensible in order to be positive for pupils’ linguistic development. What is comprehensible is individual and every pupil needs a different amount of support to comprehend things (Krashen, 2009, 63-64). This corresponds with the idea of scaffolding, where each individual should receive support in his or her zone of proximal zone of development from someone who is already in possession of the knowledge (Wood et al., 1976, p. 90). From the observation, it was obvious that none of the teachers spoke the TL consistently. The results from the grade four and grade five showed different results but it was obvious that both teachers used both the TL and L1 when explaining something or when they supported the pupils. For instance, in grade four the results showed that the teacher spent almost the same time using the TL as L1 when supporting pupils during exercises. The teacher probably did that because she felt it was necessary. In grade five the teacher spent almost the same time using the TL as L1 when explaining grammar and introducing new vocabulary. Grammar is a particularly difficult area for many pupils to comprehend, and where it is common that teachers use the pupils’ L1 when explaining it (Bateman, 2008; Chambers, 2013). New vocabulary could be challenging for pupils to learn as well and is also an area where it is common for the teacher to use the L1 (Beckham Anthony, 2008).

The classroom environment is something that many teachers have to work with. Research shows that it is of utmost importance that pupils feels safe there in order to develop enough self-confidence to dare to speak the TL (Beckham Anthony, 2008; Chambers, 2013; Lundberg, 2010, pp. 25-26). The results of the questionnaire show that most pupils in both grade 4 and grade 5 speak the TL during lessons, either often or sometimes. Only a few say that they always speak the TL. Approximately half of the pupils answered yes when asked if they dare to speak the TL in front of the class. The comments following this question showed that some pupils do not feel safe enough to speak in front of their classmates. The most common answer was that they were afraid of saying something wrong, which for instance could lead to laughter among the classmates according to one pupil. Even though the classroom environment seems to be good in general, both teachers have some challenges to work on in order to make every pupil feel safe enough to dare to speak the TL in front of their classmates. Pupils need to feel safe enough to develop needed confidence in order to speak, which will help them to develop their linguistic abilities properly (Beckham Anthony, 2008; Chambers, 2013). Otherwise, there is a chance that the pupils develop a feeling of being left out.

Most pupils in both grade four and grade five claim that they learn best when they work in pairs. Still, the results show that the majority of the pupils experience that they neither work in pairs nor groups very often. Research shows that pupils need plenty of TL input and output exercises in order to develop good language abilities, especially a good pronunciation technique (Lundberg, 2010, p. 19; Pinter, 2006, pp. 45-46). Furthermore, working together, when they are able to discuss and solve problems together, seems to make them more motivated to learn (Beckham Anthony, 2008). The results also show that a vast majority of the pupils, especially the boys, have spare-time interests where they use English. This is
another area that could be included in pair work and group work, which would increase the pupils’ interest in, and their motivation to learn English (Beckham Anthony, 2008).

Speaking the TL during pair work and group work is something that the teachers need to work with in both classes. According to the pupils’ answers, they do not speak the TL consistently when they work in pairs or in groups, and the teachers often have to remind them to. Furthermore, pair work and group work is especially positive since pupils are able to scaffold each other during activities and when they are supposed to learn something new (Wood et al., 1976, p. 90). For instance, if someone has trouble understanding something, another pupil in the group who already understands can scaffold the pupil into understanding (Beckman Anthony, 2008). However, the condition is that the pupil who is supposed to learn is within his/her zone of proximal development where it is possible to learn and thereby be scaffolded into acquiring new knowledge (Wood et al., 1976, p. 90).

6.2 Limitations and methodology discussion

In this study two different methods were used to collect data: a pupil questionnaire, and observation of two teachers. The pupil questionnaire had 42 respondents from one grade four and one grade five. Before the collection of data started, a pilot study was conducted in another grade four. The answers in that pilot study were analyzed, and necessary adjustments were made to questions that were considered in need of it. In the observations, one teacher participated in grade four and one teacher in grade five. The observations took place during three lessons in each class within a week’s time. An observation protocol was used and consisted of minute-by-minute note taking of the TL and the L1 use, which was also divided into different categories. The protocol was not evaluated before the actual study started. Instead it was evaluated during the first two lessons that were observed. The only change made to the observation protocol was to add a few extra categories. Otherwise it worked out well.

The majority of the questions in the questionnaire received useful answers. However, even though the questionnaire had been evaluated and adjusted, it was discovered after the main study had been conducted that the answers to question 17 and 21 were not satisfying and not useful in the results section. In question 17, the respondents were asked to answer if they had use of spare time activities where they use English in English lessons in school. The respondent’s answers made it obvious that question 17 had been mixed up with a previous question and contained almost the same answers. Therefore, the answers to that question were not included in the results section. In question 21, the pupils were asked to suggest how to use the target language more during English lessons, but that question was probably too difficult for pupils in grade four and five to answer. Even though some pupils had written short answers, none of the other answers were considered relevant enough to use. For instance, the answers contained different suggestions of how to punish the pupils that did not speak more English. Therefore, the answers to that question were excluded as well from the results part.

The results and thereby the conclusions that can be drawn from this study are limited due to reasons such as the short time frame, a low number of participants, and the choices of methods for collecting data. Since time was limited, the author had to limit both the number of participants and the amount of observations in order to be able to analyze and compile the data within a certain time frame. Nevertheless, using two different methods increased the amount of data and made it possible to compare what the pupils experienced with the actual English teaching. This way of conducting research is called triangulation and can both widen
the understanding and give a more complete picture of how things stand (Eliasson, 2013, p. 31).

7 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to examine the target language use in English lessons for Swedish upper elementary classes, and to examine what pupils’ opinions on TL use are. The following research questions were used:

- How and when do pupils receive target-language input during English lessons?
- What are pupils’ opinions on using the target language during English lessons?

As the results show, pupils in both grades have a positive attitude towards the English subject, and experience that they receive plenty of TL input during the English lessons from both the teachers and other sources. None of the teachers use the TL consistently during the English lessons, but it seems to be a choice made by the teachers in order to facilitate the pupils understanding of, for example, grammar. This is a procedure that corresponds with Krashen’s (2009) theory of comprehensible input. Still, a large number of the pupils believe that the difficulty levels of the lessons are easy, which is an area that probably needs attention and adjustment in order to give all pupils a suitable challenge. After all, providing pupils with an optimized difficulty level and the right amount of challenge, gives each and every pupil an opportunity to be in their zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

Pupils need plenty of opportunities to receive TL input, but also opportunities to produce output in order to develop important language abilities, for example a good pronunciation technique and language strategies for understanding and speaking the TL (Bateman, 2008; Beckman Anthony, 2008; Chambers, 2013; Lundberg, 2010, p. 19; Pinter, 2006, pp. 45-46; Sesek, 2005; Wyatt, 2009). The results showed two particularly interesting things regarding this matter. Firstly, a large number of the pupils seemed to think that pair work is the best way to learn English, although working in pairs did not seem to be a common teaching practice in the lessons. This is unfortunate, since pair work gives the pupils opportunities to discuss and solve problems together (Beckham Anthony, 2008), and thereby gives them an excellent opportunity to scaffold each other into learning new things (Wood et al., 1976, p. 90). Secondly, the results showed that half of the pupils felt confident enough to speak the TL in front of their classmates, but also that the other half felt more insecure and some even mentioned that they were too afraid to speak at all. Creating a safe classroom environment is an important task for a language teacher, and crucial if the teacher wants his or her pupils to develop enough self-confidence to dare to speak the TL in front the classmates (Beckham Anthony, 2008; Chambers, 2013; Lundberg, 2010, pp. 25-26).

Even though the results in this thesis show several positive features of using the TL in the English language classroom in Sweden, they also show that a language teacher has plenty of challenges to overcome. Furthermore, the results show how important it is for a teacher to reflect on their teaching, and that the pupils are a valuable source for information on how successful it is. It is of utmost importance that a teacher gives the pupils continuous feedback throughout their school time, but teachers need continuous feedback as well. The quote below comes from one of the observed teachers in this thesis, and will serve as a final conclusion:

“As long as you have pupils, you will always learn new things” (February 2016).
7.1 Further research

The results in this study were collected with two different methods: a questionnaire with 42 responding pupils and observations of two teachers’ English lessons during a week’s time. Even though this thesis is based on small-scale research methods, it is still possible to draw some conclusions from it regarding this specific sample. Still, a considerably larger study needs to be conducted in order to generalize the results. A larger study could show how much TL is actually used during English lessons, what it is used for, and if it varies between different schools. In addition, it would be interesting to see if these pupils’ opinions are representative for pupils in all of Sweden.

Possible further research with the same aim and research questions could consist of observations but to a much larger extent and during a longer period of time than in this study. An alternative could also be to examine teachers’ views and opinions on the use of the TL and the L1 in the classroom. In addition, the pupils’ opinions could be followed up with interviews in order to develop a deeper understanding of their attitudes toward target language use in the English classroom.
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Appendix 1: Pupil questionnaire

Jag har lämnat in vårdnadshavares underskrift ☐

Enkätundersökning för elever

1. Körn

2. Vilken årskurs går du i?

3. I vilken årskurs började du lära dig engelska i skolan?

4. Vad tycker du om engelskämmnet?
   - Roligt/Ganska roligt/Varken eller/Ganska tråkigt/tråkigt

5. Vad tycker du om uppgifter ni gör under engelsklektionerna?
   - Roliga/Ganska roliga/Varken eller/Ganska tråkiga/tråkiga

6. Tycker du att lektionerna i engelska är lätt eller svåra?
   - Lätta/Ganska lätta/Varken eller/Ganska svåra/Svåra

7. Brukar er lärare prata på engelska på engelsklektionerna?
   - Hela tiden/Mycket/Lika mycket som på svenska/Ibland/Nästan aldrig

   - Läraren pratar/Läraren läser högt/Lyssna på CD-spelare(Dialog & Övningar)/Se korta videoklipp(Youtube m.m.)/Se på TV-serier/Klasskamrater(pratar, läser m.m.)/Se på film/Lyssna på musik/Annat

9. Brukar du prata på engelska under engelsklektionerna?
   - Alltid/Ofta/Ibland/Sällan/Aldrig

10. Vågar du prata på engelska inför klassen?
    - Ja/Nej/Ibland
    - Om du svarat nej eller ibland på frågan, berätta gärna lite kort varför:

11. Brukar ni arbeta i par med uppgifter på engelska?
    - Ofta/Ganska ofta/Ibland/Sällan/Aldrig

12. Brukar ni arbeta i grupper (3 eller fler) med uppgifter på engelska?
    - Ofta/Ganska ofta/Ibland/Sällan/Aldrig

13. Hur tycker du att du lär dig bäst?
    - Arbeta själv/Arbeta med en klasskamrat/Arbeta i grupp/Helklass med stöd av lärare/Annat
14. Om ni arbetar två och två eller i grupp, brukar ni använda engelska när ni pratar med varandra?
   - Ofta/Ganska ofta/Ibland/Sällan/Aldrig

15. Om ni arbetar i par eller i grupp, brukar er lärare säga till er att använda engelska när ni ska prata med varandra?
   - Ofta/Ganska ofta/Ibland/Sällan/Aldrig

16. Har du fritidsintressen som du möter/använder engelska i?
   - Ja/Nej
   - Om du svarat ja på frågan, ange gärna lite kort vilket/vilka intressen du har (exempel kan vara att läsa böcker på engelska, skriva på engelska, chatta, spela, sociala forum, musik, film och liknande)

17. Om du har fritidsintressen där du möter/använder engelska, får du användning för dessa i undervisningen i skolan?
   - Ja/Nej/Har inga intressen där engelska används
   - Om du svarat ja på frågan, ange gärna lite kort på vilket sätt (exempel kan vara att få använda eller skriva/berätta om de böcker du läser hemma på lektionen, att få träna på att chatta på lektionen, skriva och berätta om spelen man spelar, att sociala forum används i undervisningen, att lyssna till musik och titta på texter, med mera).

18. Har du användning för engelskan som du lär dig i skolan på din fritid?
   - Ja/Nej
   - Om du svarat ja på frågan, ange gärna lite kort på vilket sätt (exempel kan vara att använda ord du lärt dig när du skriver/chattar med någon eller att det blivit lättare att läsa engelska böcker, att förstå musik du lyssnar på, förstå och kommunicera i spel, med mera).

19. Får du lära dig att sätta nya engelska ord som du lär dig i skolan i meningar?
   - Ja/Nej

20. Får du lära dig att uttala nya engelska ord som du lär dig i skolan på rätt sätt?
   - Ja/Nej

21. Avslutningsvis, har du några förslag på hur man skulle kunna göra för att tala mer engelska under lektionerna?
Appendix 2: Observation protocol

Observation protocol
Date:
Age group:
Lesson time:
Environment:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Minute</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Swedish</th>
<th>D</th>
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D = Dialogue
E = Explanation
G/V = Grammar/Vocabulary
I = Instructions
QP = Questions to pupils
QT = Questions to teacher
R = Reading
S = Support during exercises
Appendix 3: Parents’ consent letter

Information om deltagande i undersökning av målspråkets användning i ämnet engelska för årskurserna 4-6.

Ni som vårdnadshavare tillfrågas härmed om era barns deltagande i denna undersökning.

Syftet med den här undersökningen är att se hur och när målspråket, d.v.s. engelska, används i engelskundervisningen för årskurserna 4-6 och vad eleverna har för åsikter om detta. Då det finns begränsat med forskning kring ämnet, åtminstone i Sverige, så är förhoppningen att denna undersökning kan vara med och bidra till ökad kunskap.


Undersökningen kommer att följa de etiska och moraliska aspekter som är vederlagda av Forskningsetiska nämnden vid Högskolan Dalarna. Detta innebär att det råder full anonymitet för de som deltar. Vare sig namn på elever, lärare, skolor eller annat som kan avslöja deras identitet kommer att framgå. Allt insamlat material som anteckningar, formulär och liknande, kommer att förstöras efter att examensarbetet är färdigt.

Deltagandet i undersökningen är helt frivilligt, vilket innebär att även om ni vårdnadshavare har gett ert samtycke till att era barn får medverka i undersökningarna, så kan de själva välja att avstå från deltagande närhelst de vill och utan att de behöver motivera varför.

Resultaten från denna undersökning kommer att presenteras i form av ett examensarbete vid Högskolan Dalarna samt vara tillgängligt på DiVA (Digitala Vetenskapliga Arkivet) på internet.

Mitt barn får delta i observationen

Ja ☐ Nej ☐

Mitt barn får delta i enkätundersökningen

Ja ☐ Nej ☐

Barnets namn: ________________________________

Vårdnadshavares underskrift: ________________________________

Vid frågor, funderingar eller behov av vidare upplysningar kan någon av nedanstående kontakta.

Student: Carl Rosenquist
Handledare: Katarina Lindahl
Kontaktpågifter
Kontaktpågifter

________________________

________________________

33
Appendix 4: Pupils’ consent letter

Information till er elever i årskurs 4 och 5 om att delta i en undersökning om engelsklektionerna.

Hej på er!

Jag heter Carl Rosenquist och läser till lärare för årskurserna 4-6 vid Högskolan Dalarna. Jag ska genomföra en undersökning på er skola och undrar därför om du vill vara med i den. Jag kommer att vara med på era lektioner och titta på hur de går till och jag kommer också att dela ut en enkät med frågor om engelskundervisningen.

I enkäten kommer jag att fråga om ämnet engelska och framför allt om vad du tycker om att prata engelska på lektionerna.

Att delta är helt frivilligt och du kan när som helst avbryta och välja att inte vara med i studien utan att förklara varför.

Jag vill vara med i undersökningen Ja ☐ Nej ☐

Mitt namn: ____________________________

Årskurs: _________
Appendix 5: Teachers’ consent letter

HÖGSKOLAN DALARNA

Information om deltagande i observation av lektioner i ämnet engelska för årskurserna 4-6.

Du som klasslärare tillfrågas härmed om deltagande i denna undersökning.

Det övergripande syftet med den här observationen är att se hur engelskundervisningen för årsurserna 4-6 fungerar och framför allt hur ni lärare agerar och genomför lektionerna. En viktig aspekt för mig är att genomföra den här undersökningen på ett så objektivt och icke värderande sätt som möjligt. Jag vill inte heller påverka eätt sätt att undervisa, utan anser att det är viktigt för den här undersökningens reliabilitet att ni genomför lektionerna såsom ni brukar. Därav kommer inte ytterligare detaljer om undersökningens syfte att framgå här, utan kommer som det framgår längre ner, att kunna läsas i examensarbetet.

Undersökningen kommer att följa de etiska och moraliska aspekter som är vederlagda av Forskningsetiska nämnden vid Högskolan Dalarna. Detta innebär att det råder full anonymitet för er som deltar. Vare sig namn på er lärare, de skolor ni arbetar på eller annat som kan avslöja er identitet kommer att framgå. Allt insamlad observationsmateriel kommer att förstöras efter att examensarbetet är färdigt.

Deltagandet i undersökningen är helt frivilligt, vilket innebär att ni kan välja att avstå från fortsatt deltagande närhelst ni vill och utan att ni behöver motivera varför.

Resultaten från denna undersökning kommer att presenteras i form av ett examensarbete vid Högskolan Dalarna samt vara tillgängligt på DiVA (Digitala Vetenskapliga Arkivet) på internet.

Jag vill vara med i undersökningen ☐ Ja ☐ Nej

Namn: ____________________________

Årskurs: _________

Vid frågor, funderingar eller behov av vidare upplysningar kan någon av nedanstående kontaktras.

Student: Carl Rosenquist
Kontaktuppgifter

Handledare: Katarina Lindahl
Kontaktuppgifter