Student Influence during English Lessons

- A Comparison of the Socialisation in India and Sweden

Therese Kihlstenius
Linnéa Thorsteinsen

Supervisors: Raija Kangassalo,
Karin Molander Danielsson, Helena Darnell Berggren
Examiner: Helena Darnell Berggren
ABSTRACT

Therese Kihlstenius and Linnéa Thorsteinsen

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This project is a comparative study of three elementary schools in India and two elementary schools in Sweden. The purpose of this project is to study if Indian and Swedish students have the possibility to have influence on their English lessons. The research involves values conveyed in the socialisation and their consequences for student influence, democracy and society in the two countries.

National and international research and literature concerning socialisation, language didactics, democracy and student influence were used as a foundation of this study. Furthermore, the study investigates the Swedish and the Indian curricula, and makes use of observations of English lessons, questionnaires and interviews with teachers in both countries. The method for this research is qualitative with some features of quantitative research and based in the method of Grounded theory.

The results of this project is that the teachers in both countries controlled the students in different ways during the lessons and practiced student influence only when letting the students choose between preselected materials. Exclusion, inclusion and the hidden curriculum were aspects that appeared, which are likely to teach the students about their individual values in society. The lack of student influence consequently leads to the students being discouraged to be partaking citizens. Instead, the students will learn to follow the rules of society, be loyal to authorities and to carry established values with them and thus reproduce the society in each country and make it remain the same.

Keywords: Sweden, India, socialisation, student influence, teaching, English lessons.
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Dhanyavaad!

Therese Kihlstenius and Linnéa Thorsteinsen
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1 Introduction

This is a study in which student influence during English lessons in Sweden and India will be researched as well as its consequences for these societies. Language and communication are essential for the socialisation of individuals, Roger Säljö (2000) states, since interaction between adults and children will facilitate learning of culture and life in society (Säljö, 2000:66-67). Furthermore, student influence is an important part of the socialisation that appears in the school context. According to Carl Anders Säfström (2005), children are born into an unfamiliar society and for them to fit into it they need to adjust to their environment. When being socialized through parents and institutions the future citizens develop in adequate and desirable ways (Säfström, 2005:14). This, since values, norms and rules of society on how to behave will be taught. The socialisation also enables society to remain in the same way, even though generations will die out and leave place for new generations (Giddens, 2007:161).

In Swedish schools democracy and student influence are considered as a right for each and every student (Skolverket, 2006:4, 5; Skolverket, 2008d:1). In India, on the other hand, democracy and student influence are not mentioned in the curriculum. Despite this, the interesting part of this degree paper is not about student influence being mentioned or not in the documents. Student influence requires a more complex explanation, Tomas Englund (2004) states, than merely studying this aspect alone in documents or during lessons. The most important aspect of student influence is not how much influence students have, but rather about analyzing and explaining the consequences of the influence or absence of influence (Englund, 2004:98).

The mission for the teaching profession involves the responsibility to foster new generations of citizens and to transmit the knowledge they need to master in order to become partaking members of society (Nordenfalk, 2004:137; Skolverket, 2006:4, 5). According to Säfström learning should question common ways or thinking and introduce new more critical perspectives to those that we normally take for granted. This will reveal the differences between people, which will create democracy itself (Säfström, 2005:71-72). What these future citizens will experience and learn in school will thus eventually end up and be used in society.
The teacher programme emphasizes student influence as an essential aspect for the learning process and for the future of a democratic society. Student influence and socialisation in school will also reveal what the students learn about society and about themselves in the classroom. This makes the topic adequate for research. The conclusions for this study might be of interest for educational personnel to view other perspectives and perhaps be inspired as they might experience an eye opening moment. This, since they might face consequences of their teaching that they have not been aware of before. The project could moreover be used for further research when studying yet another country’s educational structure or other schools in Sweden and relate them to this topic. The research materials could also be used as a pilot project to introduce teachers to several ways of thinking regarding student influence and its outcomes.

1.1 Aims of the study

The aims of this study are to find out in what ways the English lessons in Swedish and Indian schools compare to one another regarding student influence and socialisation in school. The importance of doing research on student influence lies in the stressed significance of influence for students’ learning process (Danell et al., 1999:62). Moreover, student influence is a crucial part of socialisation in school and thereby important to research since it will affect the future of the society.

Question 1: How is student influence revealed during English lessons in Sweden and in India?

Question 2: How do the teachers apply socialisation and democracy during English lessons in Sweden and in India?

1.2 Limitations

The project is limited to involve merely the teaching of the English language due to the fact that we both are teacher students with English as our first subject. Students between the ages of eleven and sixteen years were selected. The reason for this was that we wished to attain a sample of students who had attended English lessons for some years. Additionally, we intended to reach a selection of students, who still were in a noticeable learning process. India was involved in this research as a result of the requirements for undertaking a Minor Field
Study, which stated that the research must involve a developing country. India seemed, in this case, to be a safe country to travel in and a place where we would be able to communicate with people in English without needing an interpreter. Since English is an important language in India this also created a satisfying basis for our study of English lessons.

1.3 Settings

The study was situated in two schools in the middle regions of Sweden and in three schools in India in the cities of New Delhi (Northern India), Kolkata (Eastern India) and Bengaluru (Southern India). The Indian cities were selected due to their locations to provide a more satisfying perspective of a country of this size. The Swedish schools were selected through a convenient sample.

1.4 Study outline

This degree paper begins with an introduction in chapter one, in which abbreviations are explained and the definitions of democracy, socialisation and student influence are described and clarified. As in all research dealing with people, ethical aspects are considered. The working method and the procedure of this project are furthermore described in chapter two as well as the information about how the data was collected and organized. The reliability and validity of the project are moreover taken into account in this chapter.

The background of this project is found in chapter three and includes information about democracy, student influence, socialisation in school and the school systems of Sweden and India. These aspects are presented in order to establish an understanding of the Swedish and the Indian points of view when dealing with these aspects further on in this study. The texts about the school systems are used to provide information about the establishments as well as the democracy and the values that the schools in these countries are to follow. These aspects provide a basis for this comparative study regarding the usage of student influence in the socializing process and its consequences for society.

The results of the research are found in chapter four and concluded by presenting the interviews, the questionnaires and the observations. The interviews of the teachers demonstrate the values and morals as well as democratic ideas in the Swedish and the Indian schools and their societies. This is significant data when doing a study of students’
socialisation. The results show which values and morals that are conveyed in Swedish and Indian schools.

The discussion in chapter five and the conclusions in chapter six concern the overall results and bring up similarities and differences between the teachers’ practice of student influence during English lessons. These sections explore if and how this is done. Furthermore, the values conveyed to the students in school and the consequences of this socialisation for society and democracy in Sweden and in India are discussed.

### 1.5 Definitions of words used in this project

#### Abbreviations

- **S1** The first observation in Sweden.
- **S2** The second observation in Sweden.
- **S3** The third observation in Sweden.
- **S4** The fourth observation in Sweden.
- **S5** The fifth observation in Sweden.
- **S6** The sixth observation in Sweden.
- **N1** The first observation in New Delhi.
- **N2** The second observation in New Delhi.
- **K1** The first observation in Kolkata.
- **K2** The second observation in Kolkata.
- **B1** The first observation in Bengaluru.
- **B2** The second observation in Bengaluru.

**Democracy**: In this study, democracy involves two aspects – *freedom* and *equality*. Citizens experience freedom through decision making and equality in society (Goldmann et al., 1997:40). Additionally, George Ritzer (ed.) (2005) adds accountability as another vital ingredient for democracy and for which the citizens must look after and care for one another (Ritzer, 2005:193). Democracy could therefore be defined as equal access to social power (Nationalencyklopedin, 1990:498). The participation of the citizen is also crucial for democracy (Brante et al., 2001:53). However, the definition of a citizen and the apprehension
of who is allowed and not allowed to take part in the society have been debated ever since Ancient Greece and still are (Goldmann et al., 1997:40).

Socialisation: In this study, socialisation is as Marshall states “the process by which we learn to become members of society” (our translation, p. 624) and how to act accordingly and live up to the role of society given to the individual. This is learned through embracing the values and the norms of society (Marshall, 1998:624). Order of society is thus created by obeying the rules that the society holds. Furthermore, socialisation leads to differences between people, for instance among classes and cultural groups (Nationalencyklopedin, 1995:28).

Student influence: Student influence in this study indicates that students have an impact on their education and are entitled to make decisions (Demokrati i skolan, 2007:1), for instance by voting and making general choices regarding topics for essays and content of lessons in a macro perspective (Skolverket, 2008d:1).

1.6 Ethical considerations

In this study the four ethical issues have been considered in order to protect the integrity of the people involved. These issues are the ethical dilemma regarding the permission to collect data, the right of respondents to end involvement, the disclosure of sensitive material and the use of information and communication technology. These issues have been respected by sending the respondents letters where they have been informed about the aims of the study and why it is of interest for us to fulfil this research. Furthermore, the respondents have been instructed about their option to end the involvement in the research process at any time. The participants have moreover been informed about their right to decline responding to certain questions if they wish to. The participants will remain anonymous for anyone who is not involved in the study. The students are under the age of fifteen, but as we regard the students as a group rather than individuals, the participants did not need their parents’ permission to be included. All research materials will be handled with professional confidentiality. The collected materials will strictly be used for scientific purposes and will not be displayed in commercial contexts (Vetenskapsrådet, 2004:7, 9, 12, 14).
2 Method and materials

The selection of schools in this study was based on a convenient sample, due to difficulties in finding Indian schools with contact information on the Internet. For this reason, those schools in India which fulfilled the criterion of being able to be reached by e-mail were requested to take part in our research. Fortunately, schools in all three cities were willing to be included. Before the research project in India a Swedish reference group was selected and later on compared with the Indian results. The Swedish schools were limited to a convenient sample in view of the fact that several schools did not respond.

Two elementary schools in Sweden and three in India were examined. The schools in Sweden were state schools and free from fees, while the Indian schools were private schools, which the students’ parents had to pay for. Both the parents of the students and the teachers in the Indian schools were well-educated. The students were between the ages of eleven and fifteen, given that this study required the average Indian student who does not master the English language all together and the reference group needed to be comparative. The Swedish students had studied English for six to nine years and the Indian students for five to nine years, since the Indian students begin with English one year earlier than we do in Sweden. The Indian students had English as their first or second language.

At each school in India two English classes were observed, and in at each school in Sweden three classes were observed. This means that there were six observations done in the Swedish schools and six observations in the Indian schools. Twelve teachers in Sweden filled in questionnaires and twelve teachers filled in questionnaires in India. In Sweden, three teachers were interviewed and in India three teachers were interviewed. These teachers were interviewed separately by both of us in a private room at each school to minimize the disturbance of other people during the interviews. The teachers from the observed classes were requested to fill in questionnaires in both countries in order to discover whether or not their actions were congruent with their opinions. The Indian interviews were in English, while the Swedish interviews were in Swedish and later on translated by us into English.

Information about the Indian and the Swedish English education, their societies and values was gathered through interviews with the teachers in both countries, and by reading literature concerning education, Swedish and Indian societies and their curricula, which created a solid and comparable background.
2.1 Methods of analysis and investigation

The Swedish and the Indian teachers were selected randomly. The Indian teachers participated in semi-structured interviews consisting of prewritten questions with the intention to encourage a discussion with further questions. The Swedish interviews were conducted in Swedish and translated into English. To minimize disturbance during the interviews we avoided writing down long sentences of conversation and, instead, we utilized the technique of keywords.

We did not participate in any classroom activities during the observations in order to make the study as objective as possible. To simplify the comparison of the observations in Sweden and India observation-schedules were used. These observation-schedules contained preselected classroom aspects relevant for our study, which could be filled in during the observations. To accomplish this, an operationalization was carried out to find out what the word student influence implies and if and how it is used in the classroom. Operationalization involves a concretized understanding of a specific term in order to make an investigation (Bryman, 2002:78). The observation-schedule is found in Appendix five.

This study consists of qualitative research with some quantitative features. The method Grounded Theory has been used, which means that the data and the analysis come in a parallel process instead of being separated from each other. This is the essential feature of Grounded Theory and the method is also the most common and preferable when doing qualitative research (Bryman, 2002:375-380). In our study the collected materials has been openly encoded and data has been separated, compared and categorized into specific themes. During this process ideas and important thoughts were gathered in a memo to prevent the loss of valuable and useful ideas.

2.2 Reliability and validity

This study is reliable (Bryman, 2002:43), since we consider that the results do not depend on coincidences. The reliability is strengthened as we have presented the questions for our research materials and our analyses and results. The informants were not informed about our intentions of studying student influence, democracy and socialisation in order to not influence their teaching during the observations. In Sweden, the teacher in S1, tried to control our study by inspecting our observation-schedule. This may have affected the results, since the teacher...
knew what our observation-schedule looked like and exactly what aspects we observed in the classroom and therefore may have acted accordingly.

The validity of concepts (Bryman, 2002:43) is considered to be fulfilled. The method for the observations measures student influence during English lessons and the teachers’ approach towards the students, which is a part of the socialisation and therefore affects it. This is due to the operationalization that the observation-schedule was based upon.

The external validity (Bryman, 2002:44) is sufficient due to the fact that the results of the study might be generative in other school contexts in these specific countries. Despite the fact that this study was arranged in the Northern, Eastern and Southern parts of India similar results were found among the schools. The reliability of the study could be questioned since the study is minor. However, we believe that the results might be generalized and useful in further research within different teaching methods and student influence.

The project also demonstrates internal validity (Bryman, 2002:44). The fact that the Swedish teacher in S1 became aware of the focus of the observation may have influenced her way of teaching and her approach towards her students during the observation. It is possible that the notion of our intentions for the observation made her act differently than if she had not been aware of the specific aspects we were searching for. In view of the fact that this only regarded one of the teachers in this study we do not consider this to create any bias in our results.

The empirical part of this study was centered in the school environment from the beginning of the study to the end. This is how the ecological validity (Bryman, 2002:45) is demonstrated. We believe that our presence in the classroom affected the students and the teachers at first, but as the lessons proceeded they gave the impression of paying less attention to us and continued working as if we were not there.

3 Background

3.1 Democracy and student influence

When doing research on how student influence and democracy affect students it is vital to study the socialisation of the Swedish and the Indian society. Therefore the following paragraphs will explain the process of the socialisation and how it affects the norms and the
values of society and its citizens. School democracy is pluralistic, even though most schools tend to associate democracy with student influence. During the 1990s student influence has increased in Sweden (Skolverket, 2000:24-26). These are facts that we will discuss more in chapter five and six.

Socialisation is the process in which a child learns about his or her own culture and society (Giddens, 2007:161). In this way the individual develops a productive and reproductive role in society (Säfström, 2005:14). According to Anthony Giddens (2007) the reproductive role of the citizens is what makes society remain in a certain way as time goes by and as adults and elder people teach the children values, norms and ways of behaviour (Giddens, 2007:161).

Since the individual needs to follow the rules of society and its limitations, socialisation also comes to include features of power and hierarchic control. The school has an important role in this process, since individuals learn about values and attitudes in school, and acquire knowledge about how to live among other people in a common society (Säfström, 2005:15).

Apart from these facts students learn about the rules of the social life, which is called the hidden curriculum. In the hidden curriculum students are taught about the power and the hierarchy in school, which group of people they belong to as well as to do as they are told, to be on time, when to talk and to sit still (Stensmo, 1998:19). This results in inequality between the students where some students feel as if they are a part of the school culture, whilst others are outsiders. This will thus favor of certain groups in school due to aspects such as gender and ability to perform and produce in class (Ferm & Malmberg, 2004:184, 187). The responses and stimuli from the teacher will affect the students’ identity and what the students think about themselves, as well as their experience they will have later on as adults in their working lives (Giddens, 2007:166). Säfström mentions the terms social- and the moral dimension as he writes about two different ways of socialisation in society. Säfström claims that individuals live with others in the social dimension, whilst the individuals live for others in the moral dimension (Säfström, 2005:19-20).

The consequences of these features in schools have been studied by Foucault, who wrote about modern institutions such as prisons, schools and hospitals and how these institutions had a controlling role on people in the society. Foucault claimed that these institutions contained power and discourses of expertise, which became a functional tool for limiting undesirable thoughts and speech amongst citizens. Hence, knowledge became a way of controlling people (Giddens, 2007:119, 496-497). Säljö also states that lack of knowledge and
skills create dependency on those who have knowledge. In this way, knowledge creates
democratic problems if it is not equally spread among people (Säljö, 2000:102-103).

Our observations observe aspects of communication. Gunvor Selberg (1999) explains that
student influence involves cooperation and therefore begins with good dialogues between
students and between the teacher and the student (Selberg, 1999:105). Communication is also
a vital ingredient for socialisation, which contributes to student influence and democracy in
the terms of being the source of influence. Knowledge is constructed through interaction
when individuals exchange experiences (Säljö, 2000:82). Birgitta Norberg Brorsson (2007)
states that much of the work in school focuses on students’ own thoughts which, as a paradox,
block out other ways of thinking. The students, in her study, did not have contact with society
when doing their writing tasks and the teacher became the only one who responded to the
students’ thoughts (Brorsson, 2007:255).

Säfström claims that communication can be divided into monologue and dialogue. The
dialogue includes a moral aspect as an individual interacts with other people (Säfström,
2005:36-37). How much the teacher allows the students to speak in the classroom will also
lead the students to think and act according to the situation. Consequently they will depend on
what the environment requires and enables them to do (Säljö, 2000:128). Monologue and
dialogue are aspects that we will come back to later on in our analysis of the results. In this
study we will be dealing with two different types of questions, which the teachers are using
during their lessons. Ulrika Tornberg (2005) describes these questions and states that the first
one is called display question and is based on facts. The teacher knows the answer and uses
the question to control the students’ knowledge. The second type of question is called
referential question and is an open question. Tornberg claims that ”the answer depends on the
information, reaction or valuation the student mediates” (our translation, Tornberg: 2005:45).
The results of the dialogue and the questions in the classrooms will be connected with these
materials later on.

3.1.1 The Swedish school system

Swedish schools have come to be the most important institution to foster new generations in
order to solve the problems in society (Regeringskansliet, 2007:1-2, 14). The Swedish
curriculum for the compulsory school system, the pre-school class and the leisure-time centre
(Lpo 94) is “in accordance with the ethics borne by Christian tradition and Western
humanism, which are achieved by fostering in the individual a sense of justice, generosity of spirit, tolerance and responsibility” (our translation, Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006:3). These values make Swedish schools responsible for raising democratic citizens, meaning citizens that regard other human beings as equals and treat everyone with respect. It is stated that “the school should promote an understanding for others and the ability to empathize” (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006:3). Furthermore, the students should be educated to resist unacceptable treatment such as racism, homophobia, sexual harassment and bullying (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006:3, 8). The importance of democratic values in school is stressed in Lpo 94:

Democracy forms the basis of the national school system. The Education Act (1985: 1100) stipulates that all school activity should be carried out in accordance with fundamental democratic values and that each and everyone working in the school should encourage respect for the intrinsic value of each person as well as for the environment we all share (Chapter I, §2) (Our translation, Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006: 3).

Discussion becomes an important feature in the classroom when fulfilling the mission of raising democratic citizens and making the students understand the values of democracy. Lena Fritzén (2003) states that classroom activities should involve interaction with society as well as important questions that society is dealing with. This will provide the earning of the democratic competence among the students, which is a valuable characteristic for values, which are desirable in the future society (Fritzén, 2003: 70). This is emphasized in Lpo 94, where the Swedish National Agency for Education states that “the school should strive to be a living social community that provides security and generates a will and a desire to learn” (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006:7). This is an aspect that applies to all teachers in school, regardless of the subject that is taught. Thus, this is not only to be taught in subjects such as civics, but also in subjects such as English. Students also learn about democracy in school when spending time together with other people and when sharing experiences and knowledge with each other (Dewey, 2005:126-127).
3.1.2 The Indian school system

When studying student influence and socialisation in Indian schools it is of interest to investigate the background facts connected to the school context, in order to understand the educational situation in India.

India is a world leading country within two paradoxical dimensions. On the one hand, India has the world’s greatest number of children who do not attend school at all. On the other hand, the country possesses the largest number of children who attend school and achieve good results. Students from better social classes are taught English more frequently and with a higher standard of English education than families from the lower classes. This, since wealthy families can afford better forms of education. In private schools English is often taught from the first grade while the English subject in the state schools is not taught before fifth grade. This results in an educational gap between poor and wealthy people in India (Kurzon, 2003:8). Due to this, many students hardly learn English during their education and have to struggle with the language if they attend higher education. When learning the English language the first language often has to be given up, but still, many students never learn to master the skills of English. This sacrifice makes the students aliens to their own social environment. These facts illustrate the status of the English language in the country as well as the importance for students to master it (Sheorey, 2006: 22).

To help the Indian people with their right to study English and receive similar opportunities to learn the language, there have been attempts to create equal basic education for all students (Utrikiska Institutet, 2008:4). Although a great number of people are deprived and illiterate, the Indian government considers India to be a magnificent democracy and the illiteracy is not regarded to be a democratic problem according to the government (Kesavan, 2007:1).

The Indian school values are presented to help understand the Indian school system. In India’s National Policy on Education (1992) paragraph 1.10 it is stated that “a human being is a positive asset and a precious national resource, which needs to be cherished, nurtured and developed with tenderness, and care, coupled with dynamism” (p. 3). Equality between people shall be emphasized with “the purpose to remove prejudices and complexes transmitted through the social environment and the accident of birth” (p. 5) (Government of India, 1998:6). Furthermore the main part of the National Policy on Education promotes values such as
India’s common cultural heritage, egalitarianism, democracy and
secularism, equality of the sexes, protection of the environment,
removal of social barriers, observance of the small family norm and
inculcation of the scientific temper (p. 5).

This is one of the few sections in the school documents where democracy is mentioned. However, the exact meaning of democracy is not described in detail in any parts of the documents.

The Indian school documents describe the school to be an institution where students should be socialized and learn about values in a similar way as this is described in the Swedish documents about the Swedish school system. According to the National Policy on Education, education is believed to “refine sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit – thus furthering the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our Constitution” (p. 4). The section Value education in the Indian National Policy on Education covers a paragraph where it is stated that the school is “a forceful tool for the cultivation of social and moral values” (p. 26). Furthermore, the National Policy on Education expresses that the value education must be based on the Indian heritage, national and universal goals and perceptions:

In our cultural plural society, education should foster universal and eternal values, oriented towards the unity and integration of our people.

Such value education should help eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism (p. 27).

The quotation above indicates that Indian people are concerned not only about the Indian values, but also about the basic values that most people share. These thoughts unite the differences between people in India.

In the National Policy on Education, it is claimed that India always have “worked for peace and understanding between nations, treating the whole world as a family” (p. 6). This shall thus be emphasized in schools in order for the students to make international contacts (Government of India, 1998:6). “To sustain and carry forward the cultural tradition, the role of old masters, who train pupils through traditional modes will be supported and recognized” (p. 26). The importance of being peaceful and kind towards others are expressed by the Indian
teachers in the interviews when claiming that Indians treat guests as gods and live for others (4.4).

The CBSE curriculum, which most schools follow in India, focuses much on general information. Thus, the curriculum contains facts about the application for the school, the school subjects, school materials, and the quantity of time for each subject and semester. According to the information about the English subject the students should be taught the language well enough to be able to communicate with other people. The teachers are obliged to help the students to use the English language not only as a tool for communication, but as a significant way in their individual learning progress. The CBSE curriculum does not express democratic values or student influence in school. Instead the curriculum is strictly focused on activities such as reading and writing (CBSE, 2009:34). This is interesting information to keep in mind as we further on will compare the democracy in the Indian schools with the democracy in the Swedish schools. This might therefore, to some extent, facilitate an explanation to the similarities or differences that might come up in our analysis.

The Indian Kothari Commission works for the Indian Government with the mission to improve the standards of education. The commission states that “what we would like to emphasize is the need to pay attention to the students’ approved and correct values at all stages of education”. The basic school values are printed in the curriculum and moral classes are found on the weekly schedules (Subramanyam, 2001:1). India does not have much democracy in their curriculum and school documents. Instead the Indian values derive mostly from their religion.
4 Results

4.1 Table of the Swedish and the Indian questionnaires

Table 1 below is based on the questionnaires that were filled in by twelve teachers in India and twelve teachers in Sweden (see Appendix four). This equals twenty-four teachers in both countries. These teachers were free to choose several alternatives for each question. Table 1 divides the Swedish answers from the Indian answers and is to be read vertically with one column at a time. The table shows the number of respondents who selected each of the alternatives in each question.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Do you decide the contents of the lessons?</th>
<th>Swedish</th>
<th>Indian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My students and I decide together</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. What are the three most important aspects when students learn English?</th>
<th>Swedish</th>
<th>Indian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to speak correct English</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Spelling</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. How do students learn and develop in the best way according to the teachers? (more than one option might be selected).</th>
<th>Swedish</th>
<th>Indian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working in a group</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking with the teacher</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking with classmates</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual work</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. How do you motivate and encourage the students to speak English? (more than one option might be selected)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivational Method</th>
<th>Swedish</th>
<th>Indian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By giving positive feedback</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By explaining the importance of knowing English</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By letting the students participate in the planning of the lessons</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Summary of the questionnaires

The three most important aspects when students learn English are, according to the Indian teachers, *how to speak correct English, discussions* and, with the same scores, *listening* and *reading*. The Swedish teachers’ results were quite similar, since they found *how to speak correct English, discussions* and *listening* as the three most important aspects. These results indicate that the teachers emphasize tasks, which do not require the students to write and turn in assignments as well as the socio-cultural aspect with interaction and the correct usage of the language. According to Tornberg (2009:230) the socio-cultural perspective emphasizes that learning take place through social and cultural interaction between people, rather than within each and every individual’s mind alone (Tornberg, 2009:230).

Moreover, *individual work* and *speaking with classmates* are regarded as an efficient way of learning English by merely two of the Indian teachers. The majority of the Indian teachers believe that the most efficient learning for the students takes place when *speaking with their teacher*. Furthermore, four Indian teachers found *group work* as one of the best ways of learning English. However, the Indian students did not participate much during the observed lessons but the teachers do most of the work themselves, which will be discussed later on. However, *group work* is according to the majority of the Swedish teachers (10) one of the most efficient ways of learning English, closely followed by *speaking with the teacher* (9) and *speaking with classmates* (8). Only five Swedish teachers believe *individual work* to be one of
the best methods when learning English, which are similar results to what the Indian teachers found (2).

Eight out of twelve Swedish teachers and five out of twelve Indian teachers claim that they decide the contents of the lessons together with their students. This indicates that there is quite a lot of student influence in these teachers’ classes. Yet, the observations will later on expose that students could only make pre-selected choices.

Nine of the Swedish teachers and nine of the Indian teachers claim that they motivate their students by giving positive feedback.

The table with its summary will be analyzed and discussed more later on in the thesis.

4.3 Interviews with the Swedish teachers

S1 claims that she is satisfied as long as the students use the English language in her classes. She also says that many of her students have problems with learning English. S2 emphasizes the usage of different levels of materials for the English lessons to be able to include all the students and to adjust the lesson according to the needs of the students’. Students in this class have to work hard in order to get their grades, she states, since many of them are weak even in other subjects and thereby they face even more problems when they need to go through with tasks in English. S3 has a more positive attitude towards her students and claims that they are quite good at English. She refers much to the curriculum when she speaks to us as if she wishes to point out that her teaching relies on the school documents. She speaks much about equality among students and that it is important to treat the students in a similar way. Despite this, she adds that this is not possible in all cases, since there is not always time to provide the students with all the help they need.

S1 explains that she plans her lessons without including the students. This is because she believes that it would to be too much work for her if the students were to be involved in the decisions that she finds important for the planning. Thus, she believes that the easiest and the quickest way to do the planning is to do it alone instead of involving the students in the process. S2 and S3 occasionally include their students in the teaching when, for example, deciding on books to read or if there is something special they want the teacher to bring up. This is usually done by asking the students, but sometimes students make their own suggestions. The latter is what is normally used in S2 and S3.
To teach the students about morals, S2 states that the classes are occasionally discussing different situations where they have to decide on the correct ways of dealing with problematic ethical situations. These situations could be anything from finding a wallet with money in it to stealing at a supermarket, and whether or not they should tell on their best friend about it or tell the police about a friend who has stolen. S1 practises morals even in her classes, but she tells us that she often works with her own stories, which she reads to the students in her classes. Each of the stories ends with a dilemma, which the students then discuss as a whole class or in small groups. The dilemmas seem to be quite similar to the topics that S2 is working with in her classes. S3 does not work much with morals in her classes, but she explains that they have another teacher at their school, who has done this in some of S3’s classes on some occasions. S3 refers to the curriculum once again and starts to speak about democracy and how important it is for the students to learn how to behave in society. Furthermore, S3 states that she does not believe all teachers need to explain morals to their students. She also clarifies that her classes already know about morals and that this is one of the reasons why she does not need to bring up the topic much in class. Moreover, moral courage is a subject that has become more and more interesting, S3 continues, in which the students learn to take responsibility as citizens and to help those in need. The citizens’ responsibility for their society and the understanding of right and wrong behaviour are aspects that are emphasized in the curriculum. Additionally, S3 claims that parents of today do not always take responsibility for their children in the way they should. Instead she says that too many parents nowadays rely on the teachers to educate their children and that some parents even blame the school if this is not done in a satisfying way.

4.4 Interviews with the Indian teachers

N1, B2 and K2 stress the fact that it is important for the teacher to be firm when teaching in order to be in control and to show the students who the leader is. Students receive homework almost every day, the teachers claim. N1, B2 and K2 explain that they strictly follow a syllabus for each subject designed by the teachers at each school. The teachers plan their lessons without including the students. Student influence is, according to the interviewed teachers, when students get to choose their own newspaper article, when deciding which character to interpret in a given story or when the teachers listen to the students’ stories.
All the Indian teachers, who were interviewed, emphasize that their students are intelligent and achieve outstanding results. N1 explains that the students often feel pressured, since the schools are private and the parents, who pay for the education, require that their children learn as much as possible for the money to be well spent. N1 knows many parents that sacrifice a lot in their lives in order to educate their children.

During the interviews we learnt a lot about the Indian values in school and in society. The teachers (N1, K1 and B2) told us that Indian traditions and customs are important for them. These are usually handed down from one generation to the next. The general Indian values are to respect their elders. K2 states that individuals have a common responsibility to raise children. Obedience to parents and compliance to their wishes is an important and traditional value. Thus parents are put before self. It is expected that the children will take care of their parents when they grow old. Similarly, the family plays a significant role and is put before self.

Students in Indian schools are taught to respect all human beings as well as the rules of the school, N1 and K2 claim. They learn that respect begets respect. B2 explains that the teacher’s role is considered very important and since ancient times, the teacher has occupied a respected position in society. Even kings and emperors have bowed before their teachers the interviews reveal. However, guests are treated as gods with hospitality and kindness, the teachers add.

Students are taught to be honest, sincere and truthful, according to B2. Furthermore, they are taught to care and to share, to give and not always expect something in return, to be compassionate and to help those in need. These are values that are emphasized during the moral lessons that the schools in India have, B2 continues. N1 also claims that to help others, for instance poor and deceased people is important when taking care of society.

Students are taught all this through stories and through examples from everyday life, the teachers explain. N1 says that the school emphasizes the worth of each student and that one lesson a week is dedicated to talk about values. In Bengaluru the students and the staff gather every morning in the assembly hall to pray. The teacher (B2) states that the school provides scripture classes where the students learn about stories from the Bible and the differences between right and wrong. The school imparts these values to the students during the course of the day emphasizing it to them by relating it with the subject. They favour good behaviour as a method of teaching morality.
4.5 The observations in Sweden and India

4.5.1 Table of the observations

Table 2 below is a summary of the observation-schedules (see Appendix five) used when observing the total of twelve English lessons in Sweden and India (see Appendix six) in order to enable a study of how the teaching affected student influence and the socialisation of the students. Each cross indicates that the specific action was observed and recognized.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>S1</th>
<th>S2</th>
<th>S3</th>
<th>S4</th>
<th>S5</th>
<th>S6</th>
<th>N1</th>
<th>N2</th>
<th>K1</th>
<th>K2</th>
<th>B1</th>
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<td>Mainly teacher monologue</td>
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<td>Repetition/imitation</td>
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### 4.6 Summary of the observations

The Indian and the Swedish students in this study learn to obey the ones that have got the power. In all classes, except for S2 and S5, the students obeyed their teachers (see Appendix 6). The Swedish classes that deviate, due to students’ objections to what they were expected to do are not seen as an important part of the socialisation. The Indian students, on the other hand, strictly followed the teacher’s orders and expectations.

Table 2 concludes that the Swedish teachers in this study are disciplinary but encouraging, whilst the Indian teachers are disciplinary but yet rejecting towards the students’ performances and abilities. Additionally, the observations show that the Swedish teachers are encouraging when paying attention to students that are considered to be good students. The students that do not give the teacher the right answer are not given any further attention or motivation. This shows that the Swedish teachers use a kinder and more uplifting attitude towards their “good” students, which is an invisible process of sorting out the students depending on their skills and knowledge. The Indian teachers use their disciplinary and rejecting methods when dealing with students that do not provide them with the correct or expected answer in class. This treatment is hard and visual for all in the classroom.

Five out of six Indian teachers mainly used teacher monologues in their classrooms while five Swedish teachers mainly used dialogues. With this monologue communication dominating the Indian classrooms there is not much student influence during the lessons. Moreover, four Swedish teachers and two Indian teachers used preselected materials and all teachers controlled the contents of the lessons, which leaves the students with little influence.
Knowledge and power are shown when the teacher poses questions to the class. In Sweden the referential- and display questions were combined in S2, S3 and S5, while S1 used only referential questions and S6 used display questions. During the observation in S1 the teacher rewards the students who give the correct answers (see Appendix 6). In India N2, K1 and B1 use referential questions while N1 and B1 use display questions in class. From a socialistic point of view, display questions become a way for the teacher to point out the students, who have memorized and learned the information and those who have not.

In India listening and discussions were the two classroom activities that were mainly used during classes. In Sweden many different aspects of learning were used aside from listening and discussions, such as vocabulary, spelling and writing (see table 2). The reason for this might have been that these are important aspects to practise in Sweden, since the Swedish students do not master the English language in the way the Indian students do. English is a foreign language in Sweden and is therefore not the mother tongue of many students as it is in India.

5 Discussion

In our study the most essential differences between the English lessons in India and Sweden were that the Indian lessons focused on the teacher and the teacher’s opinions. The teacher had a more central role in the classroom than the Swedish teachers had. In Sweden the students worked with tasks during the lessons, while the Indian students mostly listened to the teacher and had a more passive role during the lessons (see Table 2). The reason for this might be that the Indian students are required to do their work at home and the lessons are used for listening and being instructed by the teacher. In Sweden, on the other hand, students are required to do their work mostly in school and they do not have as much homework as the Indian students (see 4.4).

In this study democracy is not an essential factor during the Indian and the Swedish English lessons. Despite this, the Swedish lessons seem more democratic than the Indian lessons. This could be explained by the different views on democracy. In Sweden democracy is an important aspect, which is mentioned in many areas within society and schools (see 3.1 and
3.1.1). In India democracy does not have the same impact on society; instead religious values are emphasized (see 3.1.2).

For socialisation it is crucial for the Indian society that students learn to follow rules and authorities - teachers as well as the government and the politicians. As a consequence of India having a great number of citizens, the country must follow strict ways of leading their lives in order for the Indian people to live in a functional society. Thus, a developing country like India and its society would not function otherwise. This is a problem that we are less familiar with in an industrial country like Sweden. Sweden has few citizens and a welfare system that differs from that of India. Due to these aspects the Swedish society can function without strict rules for its citizens. The Swedish welfare system is based on liberties for the people and democratic rights, such as the freedom of speech. These liberties and rights are well-operated in the Swedish society due to the small number of people and the equality between the citizens.

Socialisation starts with the values that each society holds. Important values in Sweden deal with democracy, solidarity, equality among people, common decision making, and helping defenceless citizens. It is easily spotted that these values contain features that derive from socialistic politics as well as from Christianity. Christian morals are the foundation of Lpo 94 and therefore emphasized in the Swedish curriculum (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006:3). In India, on the other hand, values deal with equality not only among peoples, but for all living creatures, to care for, to respect and to be generous towards others (see 4.4).

During S5’s, S6’s and B1’s English lessons values are conveyed intentionally as a part of the lesson or because of situations that require a discussion about ethics and morals. All three teachers teach the students about what is the correct versus the wrong behavior (see Appendix 6).

We noticed that the Indian teachers in this study did not have the same views on students and student influence that is emphasized in the Swedish school documents, where everybody should be treated equally and have the same rights and opportunities (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006:3, 8), have the teacher’s attention (Skolverket, 2008b:1), be able to express opinions in a discussion and have influence on the education (Dewey, 2005:126-127; Selberg, 1999:105). Since students, who are lower in status than the teachers, seem to be bound to obey the teachers (see Appendix 6).
Although there are great differences between the social classes in India, new generations are socialized with the aim to trigger willingness to try to find solutions for the problems of society and make the society better (Regeringskansliet, 2007:1-2, 14). The willingness of helping society to solve the social problems is also stated in the Indian interviews when the teachers claim that it is a commitment to society to take care of poor people (see 4.4). This can be viewed as a plan to discipline citizens to acquire good morals, from which the citizens will build up society, rather than destroying it and making the problems worse.

In both Sweden and in India, socialisation makes people learn correct and moral behaviour in accordance with their societies. Since citizens are controlled by the socialisation citizens must obey the morals and ethics of society, otherwise the consequences for society and its democracy could be devastating. In the social process the citizens learn to have self control and to report rule breaking in society. This will affect the citizens in both a positive and a negative way. The positive side of this is that crime and injustice might decrease. On the other hand, the control of the citizens will lead to another form of injustice, since society itself creates power and hierarchic control between the citizens and the government. This is also how Giddens (2007) puts it, when he states that citizens are bound to follow specific rules and limitations decided by society (Giddens, 2007:166).

Säfström (2005) brings up the social dimension of socialisation and states that this dimension deals with people living with each other in a society, while the moral dimension of socialisation deals with people that are living for each other (Säfström, 2005:19- 20). Living for each other includes putting other people before self, to care for others and to not be jealous of other people’s fortunes. When studying the results from this paper and the school documents from each country it seems as if Swedish people generally tend to be living with each other, while Indian people are living for each other. Lpo 94 has a tendency to exemplify the social dimension, in which the self is emphasized with the intention to live amongst people. The emphasis in the documents is to treat people equally and respectfully as well as to feel empathy for the ones less fortunate (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006:3, 8). These facts show that the Indian society teaches their students to act when there are problems versus the Swedish society who teaches students to show understanding and sympathy for those in need. Since the Swedish society has a safety net for its citizens, Swedes do not need to be responsible for others in society. In Sweden there are institutions, which take care of people with poor economy or illnesses. Since the Swedish society takes care of its citizens,
there is no need for commitment among the citizens to take care of each other in other ways than to be able to get along and live peacefully together.

The Indian life where people live for others is congruent with what Regeringskansliet (2007) states about the school being a very important institution where the future citizens are raised to make sure society is taken care of (Regeringskansliet, 2007:1-2, 14). In this way, the citizens could be viewed as controlled by society when being raised to behave in a certain manner and when performing this mission for society. This leaves, furthermore, the government with less responsibility on their hands. The Indian society has no safety net for its citizens; this might be part of the reason why it is so important for Indian citizens to take care of each other. There are no institutions that will take care of people with bad economy or people who suffer from sickness and do not have money to pay for hospital bills. These people could therefore end up in the streets if they cannot afford a home or the care of a doctor, thus they might be obliged to rely on other citizens’ kindness and care for them. This shows a great difference between the societies of Sweden and India.

5.1 The school context in Sweden

According to Lpo 94, the teacher should help students in their development to become democratic and participating citizens in the future (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006:4, 5). In the study of the Swedish classes the students are not encouraged to think on their own in S1, but rather to imitate and repeat after the teacher and memorize what the teacher considers to be important. During the Swedish observations the students are asked to choose if they wish to work individually or in pairs, as well as to choose from preselected essay topics (see Appendix 6). This way of teaching does not encourage the students to participate, but rather to make them learn to do as the authorities tell them. How will these students learn about democracy or about participating in society, if they do not have the opportunity to choose anything in particular on their own? This is an important consideration for the socialisation in school since the students learn that they do not need to be active, which consequently creates non-participating citizens in society. Hence, why would students start being active and participating citizens when they have graduated from school?

During the Swedish lessons features of exclusion were shown, for example when some students were required to sit by themselves (see Appendix 6). This classroom aspect could be related to the statements of Foucault who claimed that power and knowledge emerge.
Foucault viewed school as an institution that controlled and supervised students’ behaviour (Giddens, 2007: 498, 620). Exclusion will also convey a message to these students that they are not important persons to teach. Socialisation teaches them that not all students are valued equally but that some are considered “better” and more worthy of learning than others. Englund (2004) states that exclusion also affects student influence in the classroom (Englund, 2004:99).

Exclusion is a part of the socialisation and division of students becomes a part of the hidden curriculum (Stensmo, 1998:19), in which teachers form ideas of the kind of future students are predicted to have. These ideas are based on the teachers’ assumptions about the students’ skills and how the students are treated by the teachers and classmates.

5.2 The school context in India

The observed English lessons in India contained discipline. Hence, obedience is, according to the Indian teachers, a very important value in the Indian society (see 4.4). Obedience is shown during the lessons where students do what the teachers tell them to do, without objections (see Appendix 6).

The deliberative democracy was not present during the Indian lessons that were observed. Hence acceptance of different opinions and agreements on what is not agreed on (Englund, 2000:5) were not found. It is not only important to have correct answers to the teacher’s questions during the Indian lessons, but the students should be perfect altogether, with bright minds and perfect body-language, gestures and voices. This is similar to the control that Foucault claims institutions to have, which can be used as a tool to silence undesirable thoughts among citizens (Giddens, 2007:119). In these cases the teachers controlled the whole presence of the students. Englund (2004) argues that student influence does not only include the classroom itself, but also the part of society, which is present in the classroom (Englund, 2004:99). If looking at these classrooms as a miniature society, the teachers will come to represent the government and the students the citizens. Since the teacher controls all aspects in these situations the values transferred to the student are all but democratic. The values convey that it is not only important what the students say but also how they say it. Furthermore, no appreciation is given to the brave and nervous students in B2 that stand before their classmates discussing their own ideas and thoughts, since these students do not behave perfectly and not in accordance with the teacher’s suggestions. Only the students in
B2 that the teacher considers to be good receive applauds (see Appendix 6). This indicates that in order to get appreciation you must be at your best and follow the accepted rules. On the other hand, democracy does not seem to be an important aspect in the Indian classroom and is therefore not strictly followed. This is also shown in the Indian school documents where democracy is merely mentioned briefly in India’s National Policy on Education and not at all in the curriculum (Government of India, 1998:4-5; CBSE, 2009).

The teachers during the English observations used many display questions, as Tornberg calls them, which means that the teacher already knows and expects a certain correct answer (Tornberg: 2005:45). This happened in K2 and in B1 when the teacher asked questions about literature. In N1, the teacher shared the students’ incorrect opinions with the class. Furthermore, the teacher in N1 decided the order of the answers and in K1 the teacher decided what topics were correct, interesting and complex enough. Moreover, in B1 it was decided who was intellectual and which one of the students that was supposed to answer the questions. In B2, the teacher decided who the student should look at when speaking and how to stand in front of the class. Additionally, one student was accused of cheating (see Appendix 6). These are aspects that could make any student nervous and afraid to take part in the lessons. This way of controlling both behaviour and opinions is neither good for student influence nor for democracy. If the classrooms in these cases would be viewed as a miniature society, with the teachers as the government and the students as the citizens, this would mean that the government controlled the citizens’ opinions, behaviour and utterances. Due to this, these classrooms could be considered to be more of a dictatorship, than a democracy. This is interesting since Foucault claimed that schools were used to control students’ thoughts as well as their knowledge (Giddens, 2007:119). Due to this the students might learn how to behave and answer, all according to the teacher’s wishes. This is also discussed by Säljö (2000:128).

There were two obvious situations in N1 and B1 where the teachers did not wait long enough for the students to think before letting someone else answer. This is a common problem in school according to Tornberg (2005:46), which, was also observed during the Swedish lessons (see Appendix 6). By not waiting the teachers show the students the importance of thinking fast or else the time is up and the opportunity to express opinions is left to the student who thinks fast and therefore also, according to the hidden curriculum, is more intelligent and more important.
The Indian lessons include mainly teacher monologues (see Table 1). For example, in N1 the teacher analyzed a poem for the students (N1) instead of letting the students try themselves and in K1 the teacher instructed the students about an essay they were going to write and asked them if they agreed with her statements, but she did not wait for the students’ answer (see Appendix 6). This could indicate that the students’ answers were not important, since the teacher was the one in charge. This creates a false feeling of student influence. It sounds as if the students have the choice to say otherwise, but the teacher does not wait long enough for them to answer. Furthermore, when the students did state their own opinions in N1, they were immediately corrected or silenced by the teacher. In N2, the teacher also spoke about successful persons as leading stars for the students’ future careers (see Appendix 6). This is something that does not appear in the Swedish school context at all. Perhaps the Indian teachers are stricter, since they are bound to lead all the students to success. Thereby, it might be necessary to point out wrong behaviour and opinions, since these do not fit the perfection and the success that the teachers try to create among the students.

5.3 The socialisation in the classroom

The dialogue is emphasized by both the Swedish and the Indian teachers (see Table 1). This means that the teachers’ beliefs are not congruent with what is practiced since the communication in S5, N2, K1, K2, B1 and B2 were mainly monologues (see Table 2). Only N1 used dialogues frequently during the lesson. In Sweden, on the other hand, only S5 used the monologue more frequently than the dialogue. This means that the Swedish teachers used more interaction during their lessons, where the students were able to discuss amongst each other. The Indian students mostly listened to what their teachers had to say, however, the students were not included in a classroom discussion.

In Sweden the teacher in S1 planned her lessons without including her students. Hence, the teacher finds it to be too much work and believes it easier to do the planning alone. These ideas are undemocratic since the students are excluded from decisions that involve their education, which is not congruent with Lpo 94. S2 and S3 occasionally include their students in the teaching, when for example, deciding on books to read or if there is something special they want the teacher to bring up. This is normally done by asking the students but sometimes students come up to the teacher with suggestions by themselves. These ideas are more similar to what student influence is all about. In Table 1 one can see that 42 percent of the Indian
teachers and 67 percent of the Swedish teachers decide the contents of the lessons together with their students. These numbers show that there is quite a lot of student influence during the English lessons, although this was not experienced during our observations. Thus, how the observed lessons were carried out and what materials to be used were decided by the teachers. When students had the possibility to make a decision, the materials were preselected by the teachers. Due to these preselected materials the students did not make any democratic choices and there was no democratic power during the lessons. This is also found in Table 2 where it is stated that all teachers in India and Sweden control the content of the lessons. Moreover the materials used are preselected by the teachers in four Swedish classes and two Indian classes. The Swedish National Agency states that there is a correlation between preselected materials and student influence. Furthermore, research reveals that preselected materials decrease student influence, since students become dependent on their teachers’ decisions of materials and instructions (Skolverket, 2008c:1). On the other hand, these results do not reveal student influence in other subjects or in other schools. Despite this, teachers in this study teach in other subjects as well, not only English. This means that students will be affected in the same way through other subjects if they use the same teaching methods. Although student influence would differ in other subjects and in other schools with other teachers, the difference cannot be great enough to change society radically. Otherwise, the order of society would not remain in the same way over time.

The students in Brorsson’s (2007) study did not have much reference to the society outside the classroom. Due to this the students did not get in contact with other opinions than those presented in the classroom. This means that teachers more or less represent society alone (Brorsson, 2007:255). The opinions created in the classrooms will therefore stay in the classroom and what is learned during class will be isolated from society. Other opinions from people and institutions outside the classroom will not be discovered by the students.

Through the socialisation in school the students will learn what they are qualified for and what they are supposed to work with when they enter society as grown-up citizens. They will know their place in the hierarchic order of society. In India, the students who were silenced due to their incorrect opinions (see Appendix 6) could turn out to be citizens who will not stand up for themselves, since they have learned to be silenced. Perhaps they will not have the courage to express their opinions, since others might view them as unintelligent as in B1 or in N1 when students who did not score well enough were pointed out in class (see Appendix 6).
On the other hand, the hierarchic order in India might be the way of leading the Indian life, which results in the socialization of the Indian society to remain in this way.

The Swedish students included in this study might learn that some behaviour are undesirable and lead to consequences, for instance when the kissing students were ignored by the teacher in S2 (see Appendix 6). The reason for this might be that this is not considered as good behaviour and the teacher might not want to waste her time on students, who seem to be uninterested in the subject. To pretend that these students are not there, which this teacher seemed to do, is an easy way of getting rid of the problem. On the other hand, it might also indicate that the teacher accepted this behaviour in her classroom. Furthermore, the two boys in S2 were even more ignored (see Appendix 6), since they sat around the corner facing the wall. In this case, the teacher did not even see them during the whole lesson since she was not moving around the classroom. These incidents would be noticed by the other students in the classroom. The students who experience these treatments will feel that they are treated differently than the others. The other students are likely to connect certain behaviour with these forms of treatments. If they do not wish to be treated in a similar way, they will probably learn to behave in a way they know is appreciated by their teacher. In S5, two students were sitting in the front row in the classroom and nodded at the teacher as she spoke (see Appendix 6). These students have probably learned that the teacher likes students who show interest during the lessons.

According to Skolverket (2008a), teachers should help students to gain influence during lessons (Skolverket, 2008a:1) but, on the contrary, democracy in school is pluralistic and teachers determine the definitions of democracy and student influence and how to adapt these aspects in the classroom (Skolverket, 2000:24-26).

6 Conclusions

This study has dealt with student influence of English lessons in classes both in India and in Sweden. The study has also looked upon what consequences can be found of student influence for the Indian and the Swedish societies and how socialisation affects the students. At first sight, the Indian and the Swedish schools seemed to differ a lot from each other, but when analyzing the materials and what the influence given by the teachers lead to in a holistic
perspective, the differences decreased. There are several features that appear in both India and Sweden, such as exclusion of some students and inclusion of others in accordance with their mastering of knowledge.

The values and the norms in both the Indian and the Swedish schools do not seem to apply to the teachers. Thus, when observing the English lessons it was discovered that the teachers did not always follow the values of the schools and the school documents. As the results showed, the teachers in India were quite insensitive towards their students. An example of this is when one of the teachers accused a student in B2 in front of the class, for not having written the text herself. Säfström claims that socialisation includes hierarchic control and power, which is often experienced in school (Säfström, 2005:15). Examples of power during the observations are the fact that some students have more opportunities to speak and are rewarded for doing so, while others are silenced or not encouraged to try. Moreover, the learning of the hidden curriculum among students is another example of power in the school, since schools teach students when to talk, how to talk, to sit still and to be quiet (Stensmo, 1998:19). The school socialisation will more or less teach the students how to behave in society with the goal of being a functioning part of society. The treatment of the girl in S1 who was not allowed to sit beside anyone, to talk with any of her friends and was forced to work on her own must have made her think about her position in the class. This is also what Giddens argues about when stating that the teacher’s feedback on the students affects their views on themselves (Giddens, 2007:166).

As mentioned before, teachers have the mission to foster new citizens in schools. Both the Indian and the Swedish educational systems regard school as a place for learning values connected to morals and ethics (Zackari & Modigh, 2002:89; The Indian National Policy on Education, 1992:26-27), but what is taught in the school is controlled by the teachers. This is due to the fact that the Swedish curriculum is pluralistic and therefore different interpretations are possible, which results in the teaching being shaped according to the teacher’s opinions and interests. In India, the school values include obedience and respect for elders, parents and teachers. This could explain why the teachers control the Indian lessons in the way they do. Due to the lack of safety net and the great poverty that many Indians suffer from the Indian society could be considered as not as understanding as the Swedish society. Because of this the citizens must take care of each other. This might also be a reason for the teachers’ strictness, as they might need to push the students and make them aware of when they succeed.
or fail a task. Since some Indian schools are expensive many students might only have one opportunity to go through school properly.

Despite this, the way of letting the students participate or not participate during the lessons, the way of controlling their speech, behaviour and opinions and by asking display questions, rather than referential questions, will have consequences. The future society and its citizens will be affected by the situations during the English lessons observed, for example the fact that only some students received appreciation for presentations and that preselected materials was the only form of student influence noticed. This will divide the students into fitting different jobs, places and groups within society, but it will also make the societies of India and Sweden prevail in a similar way.

Säfström (2005) states that democracy in school is about questioning old patterns of thoughts and that differences between people might be what produces democracy (Säfström, 2005:72). Since the features of thinking differently were not discovered in any of these observations, this could mean that democracy in these classes hardly exists.

Student influence was not adapted during any of the English lessons in Sweden or India in this study, except when choosing preselected materials. What the teacher finds important comes to be what influences the school mostly. This means that the values that are learned in school are learned without disturbances of other opinions or values from students from other parts of society. What is socialized in these classrooms will eventually enter society and be a part of the creation of the future democracy. If old patterns and values are to remain in society students should not have other opinions, especially not if they do not agree with the established ones. New opinions of different kinds would be a threat to the old ones, since they might ruin established values, break up the socialisation and change society, perhaps in an undesirable way.

To bring this analyze to a further dimension, the values learned from traditions, religions, curricula and other school documents might end up as a way of hiding what really happens in the classrooms from society. Society outside school will mostly see how the school is supposed to be according to the published documents. But, as stated above, schools generally do not have much contact with society and what happens in the classroom often stays in the classroom.

Treating students differently is likely to have consequences for the future, for instance by rewarding, silencing or ignoring students with correct or incorrect behaviour, answers and
opinions. To point out good and bad students and to include some students and exclude others, which was mentioned above, will in the end lead to favouring different kinds of potentials in future citizens. In this way, the school identifies those who have acquired certain knowledge and skills and those who are not qualified. If certain opinions and behaviours are less desirable among students, these aspects might be corrected or ignored by teachers in the school in the way it was shown during the observations in both India and Sweden. Since the good students are more encouraged during the observations, these students will probably learn what they are supposed to do and show loyalty towards the teacher. These students are also likely to become suitable individuals who will show loyalty towards society and authorities in the future. Since these students have come to learn more, for instance by working with more complex materials as in S2 (see Appendix 6), they will probably receive better grades if they continue to work in similar ways and understand more of society and have access to university and better jobs, which students with less knowledge will not have access to. These loyal and educated students have learned to write in a way that society relies on and listens more to, especially if they are educated at university, which society can take advantage of (Säfström, 2005:16). In this point of view, the students are predestined for their status and roles in society.

Socialisation might be good for society, but is not always as good for the future citizens, since it is one of the factors that affect differences and gaps between people. Differences are good for democracy, Säfström states, since this is what creates democracy itself (Säfström, 2005:72). The difference between this statement and the diversity that is created from schools is that Säfström points out different ways of thinking as important, while schools emphasize more of one correct way of thinking. Säfström means that varieties between people that think for themselves and question old patterns of thinking are vital for a democratic society. This variety becomes a contrast to the variety that is created from school, which instead of leading to diversity leads to gaps between people and between the knowledge that each and every one of them masters or does not master.

However, one could ask what is considered to be the correct way of teaching values. India is, just like Sweden, a democracy with citizens that ought to think for themselves. Despite the fact that the Swedish curriculum contains information, pieces of advice as well as rules and regulations about socialisation and democracy there were not much democracy and student influence in either country in this study during English lessons. In India democracy is merely
mentioned in a few places in the National Policy on Education. However, democracy is important, since the teachers foster their students by using an authoritarian leadership, which will teach the students about self-discipline and thus be valuable for their future lives. This means that the Indian schools also have democracy, but in a different way than in Sweden. The students are also taught to think democratically as the teachers use materials based on ethics and morals. Ethics and morals are aspects that appear in Sweden too, according to the interviews with the Swedish teachers. Despite this, there are no moral classes in Sweden as there are in India. One could therefore ask if the Swedish lessons tend to forget about teaching these values, in the same way as the Swedish people tend to forget about caring for one another.

When it comes to student influence, one thought is that there might be less student influence in the Indian schools since they value religion, self-discipline and care for others higher than influence. On the other hand, student influence in schools is not always positive, since it is dependent on for example the student’s age, responsibility and development. The answer to whether or not students should have influence might be to let students gradually learn to have influence and become a part of their education.

Not all people are aware of the socialisation since aspects of right and wrong behaviour and what is considered to be desirable and undesirable in society are learned automatically. Eventually, the origin of these learned aspects will be forgotten since the socialisation has become a hidden process that is a natural part of the sub consciousness. In this way, the information has been received successfully. The information students learned about themselves and their surroundings will appear as obvious information, which therefore will not be questioned by many people. Since this unquestioned information is a natural part of the citizens’ lives it is taken for granted by everyone and will probably be transferred to coming generations. This procedure makes the socialisation continue in the same way as before and reproduce itself. In this way, as Säfström (2005) states, socialisation makes every individual carry the same values as every other member of the society he or she lives in (Säfström, 2005:17). As old generations die and new generations come and go only minor aspects will change and society with its values, traditions and limitations will remain. Despite this, the socialisation is necessary for adapting children into the societies of India and Sweden. As stated earlier, the socialisation needs to be stricter in India due to the great population of the country. The rules and conditions of the Indian society are not the same as in Sweden. It is
therefore more important that the Indian students learn to fit into their society, since there are no safety nets for them to rely on. Although India and Sweden are both democracies, it must not be forgotten that a great difference between these countries has to do with India being a developing country and Sweden an industrial country. Although the Swedish society has more liberties for its citizens, we tend to forget to care for each other which, on the contrary, is an aspect that is more common in the Indian society due to the importance of the religious values in their society. Despite this, this study reveals that democracy and student influence were not practised much in neither Sweden nor India. This is even stranger in Sweden, since we have democracy and student influence emphasized in the school documents. Depite this, the Swedish teachers tend to be authoritarian and forget about practising student influence during their lessons. This could indicate that the Swedish teachers in this study do not believe in involving the students much during the lessons. Maybe they do not believe that the students are capable of making decisions in school. On the other hand, this actually indicates that in order to help students acquire influence and learn how to master it properly they should practice decision making and student influence during lessons.

We consider this study to be a good starting point for further research within this area. An investigation of the western and the middle parts of India, in other schools and even in other parts of Sweden would be interesting for learning if the results from those areas are similar to the results in this study. Another question worth noticing is if there are any differences between student influence within the English subject in comparison to other subjects in these two countries or if the results are similar to the results found in this study. Moreover a comparison of the development of the Indian society and how this influences how democracy is taught in Indian schools would be another interesting subject. It would also be interesting to learn how Indian schools have been affected and influenced by the British colonization in their way of teaching.
References


Electronic sources


Appendix 1
Letter to the Swedish schools

Elever och lärare,

Vi heter Linnéa Thorsteinsen och Therese Kihlstenius och är lärarstudenter vid Mälardalens högskola. Vi ska göra en studie i Indien om det indiska skolsystemets engelskundervisning, en studie som kommer att äga rum i de indiska städerna New Delhi, Kolkata och Bangaluru. Vi kommer att observera engelsklektioner, intervjua lärare och göra en enkätundersökning bland lärarna. Innan denna studie kan påbörjas behöver vi dock en svensk referensgrupp för att på så vis kunna göra en jämförelse mellan den svenska och den indiska engelskundervisningen. Av denna anledning undrar vi om det finns en möjlighet att komma till er skola för att utföra denna del av vår undersökning genom att observera en engelsklektion på er skola (gärna i årskurs 9 om detta är möjligt) och låta en engelsklärare fylla i vår enkätundersökning. Undersökningen kommer inte att beröra enskilda elever, utan består endast av observation av klassen som helhet.

I studien har hänsyn tagits till de forskningsetiska reglerna för att på så vis skydda lärarens och elevernas integritet. Vi kommer på plats att informera de involverade om syftet med undersökningen och varför detta ämne är relevant att undersöka. Deltagandet i denna undersökning är frivilligt och de medverkande har rätt att när som helst avbryta sitt deltagande i studien. Deltagarna och skolan kommer att vara anonyma och uppgifter om dem kommer inte att delges till personer utanför denna studie. Det insamlade materialet, såsom information om deltagare och skola, kommer endast att användas till forskningsändamål (Vetenskapsrådet, 2004).

Vänliga hälsningar
Linnéa Thorsteinsen och Therese Kihlstenius

Appendix 2

Letter to the Indian schools

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are two teacher students from Mälardalen University in Sweden, who are coming to India to do some research for our exam project somewhere between 1 August -1 October 2009. We are going to visit three schools in three different cities. Our research will deal with the teaching of English in India and therefore we would like to participate during some English lessons. Would you mind if we came and visited your school this autumn and observed two English lessons, interviewed one English teacher and let about four of your English teachers respond to our questionnaire? If you agree to this we will come and visit your school for a few days. Please let us know as soon as possible if your school would like to participate in our study.

Kind regards

Therese Kihlstenius
Linnéa Thorsteinsen
Appendix 3

Interview questions

1. In what ways do the students participate or do not participate in the planning of their lessons?

2. In what ways do the students have influence or do not have influence on their teaching?

3. Why is it important or unimportant for the students to have influence on their education according to you?

4. If the students have influence on their education, who takes the initiative? Students/teacher/both? Is it always like that or does it differ from time to time?

5. What values are important in your school?

6. How are these values taught in school?

7. What values do you consider to be important in society?

8. Where do the values in school and society derive from?
Appendix 4

Questionnaire

In some places in this survey you may mark more than one box if necessary.

1. Do you decide the contents of the lessons?
   Yes__ No__ My students and I decide together__

2. What are the three most important aspects when students learn English?
   Spelling__ Reading__
   Writing __ How to speak correct English__
   Vocabulary__ Listening__
   Discussing__

3. How do students learn and develop in the best way? (More than one option might be selected).
   Individual work__ Working in a group__
   Speaking with classmates__ Speaking with the teacher__

4. How do you motivate and encourage the students to speak English? (more than one option might be selected).
   By giving positive feedback__
   By explaining the importance of knowing English__
   By letting the students participate in the planning of lessons__

Thank you for your participation! / Linnéa and Therese
Appendix 5
Observation Schedule

DISCIPLINE:
Obedience____
Students’ objections____

THE TEACHER’S APPROACH:
Encouraging____ Disciplinary____
Rejecting____

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:
Listening____ Reading____
Spelling____ Writing____
Discussing____ Tests____
Oral presentation____ Vocabulary____

COMMUNITATION:
Mainly monologue____ Mainly dialogue____
Repetition/imitation____ Display questions____
Referential questions____

STUDENT INFLUENCE:
The teacher controls the contents of the lesson____
The teacher lets the students make general choices regarding the lesson____
The students’ choices of the materials are preselected by the teacher____
Appendix 6

Observed lessons

The first Swedish observation (S1)

S1 wants to have a look at the observation-schedule and claims that she needs to know what to focus on during the observation.

In class the students practice speaking and expand their vocabulary when telling stories. The teacher tries to help and support the students and the ones that answer correctly are rewarded: “Five points to you” and “A golden star for you”. The students memorize words and repeat and imitate the teacher.

A girl sits in the front of the classroom, all by herself in a separate desk. She is only allowed to work with the teacher and gets constantly told off when turning around to chat with her friends.

At the end of the lesson the students work individually or in smaller groups with translation. The students complain about the tasks which they find very difficult. One student comes to the class just before the lesson is about to finish. He has apparently been somewhere else during the English lesson and claims that he does not understand a word when the teacher talks to him in English.

The second Swedish observation (S2)

The class pays attention to the teacher and the students put their hands up before they speak. The teacher does not reward the students nor give them positive feedback other than saying “yes” or “good”. The teacher lets the students choose if they want to work individually or in pairs, and allows them to help each other with an unprepared listening exercise. Despite this, some of the students are talking about private topics, and two of the students are kissing. The teacher ignores this. She avoids looking at them, as if these students did not exist.

The teacher has prepared a task in which the students are allowed to choose between preselected essay topics such as famous scientists and musicians. The teacher later on decides on which scientist or musician the students should write their essays on.

The classroom is built in two angles and two boys are behind one of them in a corner facing the wall. They cannot see the teacher and the teacher cannot see them.
The third Swedish observation (S3)

During this lesson the students listen to a text about a lonely boy who lives in a castle. The students follow the story by listening to it and reading from a paper. The teacher stops the tape and asks the students about their opinions about the story using both display- and referential questions: “Did you understand everything?” and “How did you feel when hearing about the lonely boy?”. Without waiting for the students to answer the teachers continues writing down questions on the white board that are assumed to be hard to understand. Some students raise their hands and ask the teacher about words they do not know. The teacher turns to the class to see if any of the students knows the answers. The first student to raise her hand supplies the teacher with the correct answer. The lesson proceeds and the class discuss other difficult words that they have found.

Two boys in the back of the classroom throw rubbers on each other when the teacher is not looking.

The fourth Swedish observation (S4)

The lesson starts with the students reading a text from the work book and then translating it together in class. The students are asked to find difficult words in the text which are written on the whiteboard by the teacher. The teacher explains that the students get these words for homework until next time.

The lesson ends with the teacher showing the class the English proverb “Do not bite off more than you can chew” which is related to the story just read and asks the class if they know the meaning of the saying. Three students raise their hands but the teacher poses the question to a silent student who avoids looking at the teacher. The student looks terrified when the teacher says his name and he starts stuttering. The teacher awaits his answer patiently which is delivered after some time.

The fifth Swedish observation (S5)

During this lesson the teacher goes through grammar and writes sentences on the whiteboard. The students are asked to choose three sentences from the whiteboard and use them in a text of their own. The students find this lesson difficult and some of them utter “I do not understand” and “Why do we need to learn this?”. The teacher answers by saying that they have to learn this in order to be able to speak English. However, two students who sit in the
front of the class are writing intensively and are nodding their heads when looking at the teacher.

The class has a little break before the lesson continues again. During the break one of the students screams “hell!” which the teacher brings up in class. The teacher first states that it is not acceptable behaviour and continues explaining the origin of the word, giving the class a minor history- and linguistics lesson.

A paper with exercises on grammatical structures is handed out to the students. They are supposed to fill in the correct grammatical structures in sentences with gaps. This is after some time discussed in class.

The sixth Swedish observation (S6)
The teacher shows a picture of a little girl sitting on a rock and asks the students who they think she is; where she has been and where she is going. At first the students do not make much of it, but when one of the students states that she has run away from home the others join in.

The students are laughing and their imagination seems to be unstoppable since many suggestions on who the little girl is and what she is doing come up. One of the students screams that the little girl is ugly and the teacher asks the student why that is so. He explains that it is because of the red hair and the freckles. The teacher then tells the student that he has no reason to be mean and explains that we all look different but that we must treat everyone respectfully. “I had freckles too when I was young”, the teacher explains and looks intensely at the boy.

The teacher then puts on a new piece of paper and asks the students to choose one of the pictures on the paper and write a story about it.

The first observation in New Delhi (N1)
When the teacher walks into the classroom the students stand by their desks saying: “Good morning madam”. Every time the students have something to say they are standing up. The lesson is about Gandhi and a student’s “incorrect” opinions are unwanted and shared with the rest of the class. When students answer incorrectly or not chronologically the teacher silences them and puts her hand up in protest, signing “stop”, saying: “No, no, no that comes later!”.

The teacher says to the students “Now you do this” and “Now you have to think”.

The teacher then alone analyzes a poem and the class listens. Since the teacher asks questions without waiting for the students to answer she argues: “do not pretend that you go to a lower class than you actually do”.

The students get exams back and the teacher points out two students that received very good results and two other students that did not do well at all. This is shared with the class. None of the students are allowed to walk out of the classroom until the teachers have left.

**The second observation in New Delhi (N2)**

The windows are open in the classroom because of the warm weather which makes it quite noisy because of the traffic outside. The level of noise increases due to talkative students who discuss private matters. The teacher speaks about famous people, such as Einstein, Wordsworth, Mahatma Gandhi, Vasco da Gama, Lord Byron and uses texts from ancient Greek. Historical and successful people are presented as leading stars for the students’ future careers.

At the end of this lesson the teacher changes focus from literature to grammar. The students have had homework on advanced grammatical structures. The teacher asks the students to provide her with the correct answers which she writes on the black board.

**The first observation in Kolkata (K1)**

The students write an essay and the teacher discusses topics for an essay. The teacher instructs the students by saying: “A topic such as ‘how I spent my weekend’ is a bad topic. It is not enough for writing an essay. It is a very bad topic. You are not allowed to choose something simple. Like Ganesha said: ‘We are not supposed to choose a topic we are interested in’”.

The teacher speaks to the students and stops now and then saying: “Do you agree with me?”, without waiting for an answer. The teacher utters: “Do not write irrelevant things in your essays”. At one moment during this lesson, the teacher says “some of the students do not like to write essays”. The teacher turns to a student asking: “What do you have to say about this?”.

**The second observation in Kolkata (K2)**

The lesson begins with an oral test on the acts of Shakespeare’s play *Macbeth*. The teacher asks for details in the play: “What is the climax of act five?” and “What happens on page ten?”.
Later on some of the students are selected by the teacher to perform a part of the play. The teacher corrects pronunciation, gestures, body language and articulations while the students are performing: “Talk slower!”, “It looks like you are in trance”, “You are sleepwalking” and “You are washing yourself, rub your hands!” The students do not receive much appreciation after their performance.

**The first observation in Bengaluru (B1)**

During this lesson the teacher reads the fairy tale “The Selfish Giant” written by Oscar Wilde. The story teaches the students about not being selfish. After reading the story there is an oral test. The teacher explains that “this is to see if you have paid attention and to find out how intelligent you are”. The following display- and referential questions are asked: “where did the children play?”, “Who is where in the garden?”, “What have you learnt from this story?” and “How do you feel when you share things with others?”. The teacher tests the students by making them explain difficult words from the text. The teacher poses a question to a boy, who did not raise his hand. The boy stands up and looks a bit puzzled for a few seconds. The teacher then says: “Do you not know the answer? Okay, sit down then!”.

The lesson proceeds without the teacher losing focus. At one moment during the lesson a paper flower from a table by the window blows down on the floor. The teacher is made aware of it by a student and the teacher quickly says that she will pick it up later and continues the lesson, not distracted by the incident.

Before the lesson is over, the teacher gives the student the task of painting the selfish giant’s garden for homework.

**The second observation in Bengaluru (B2)**

The students in this class have been told to read a book written by either C. S. Lewis or Charles Dickens. During the lesson the students have oral presentations on these books. The majority of the questions posed by the teacher are quantitative and display questions: “How many chapters did your book contain?” and “How many days did it take for you to read it?”. The teacher makes the class aware of the time spent on reading the books by saying: “Did the class hear that?”. If a student looks at the teacher while answering a question, the teacher interrupts and says: “Do not talk to me, talk to the class!”.

A boy does not stand still while doing his presentation and is told off by the teacher: “Stand still! Do not dance!”. The teacher also questions a girl after her presentation, in front of the
class: “Why were you looking in your papers? Why did you struggle when you read it? Whose handwriting is that? Who wrote that for you?”.

The students have learnt to rattle off their texts and some of them have learnt it by heart. The teacher decides who deserves appreciation for the presentation and not more than one student receives applauds from the class.