Explicit and implicit comparison of English and Swedish in English course books for year 7 and year 11 in Sweden

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Abstract

This paper compares and contrasts how linguistic transfer has been incorporated in English course books for year 7 and year 11 in Swedish schools. This study has focused on finding explicit and implicit reference to transfer and interference in English course books for Swedish students by identifying references from the authors where they have pointed to similarities and differences between Swedish and English. The results of the study showed that comparisons between the languages were used in all books, but explicit references were more common than implicit references. Of the four different linguistic levels (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, pragmatics) examined in this study, grammatical comparisons were the most frequent. However, the authors of the books for year 7 used more comparisons between the languages than the authors of the year 11 books. One conclusion that can be drawn from the present study is that it is up to the authors of the course books to decide to what extent they should compare and contrast the two languages, since the national curricula for the subject English give no indications of how the subject of transfer should be dealt with in language acquisition.

Keywords: Language transfer, second language acquisition, contrastive language learning

Sammanfattning

Den här uppsatsen jämför hur lingvistisk överföring behandlas engelska kursböcker för årskurs 7 och årskurs 11 i svenska skolor. Studien har fokuserat på att undersöka i vilken mån författarna uttryckligen eller underförstått refererat till överföring och transfer genom att identifiera var kursböckerna innehåller information om likheter och skillnader mellan svenska och engelska. Resultaten från denna studie visar att sådana jämförelser mellan språken fanns i alla böcker, men att uttrycklig jämförelse var det vanligast sättet för författarna att visa på likheter och skillnader. Av de fyra olika lingvistiska nivåer som användes i denna studie (uttal, grammatik, ordförråd, pragmatik), förekom jämförelse av grammatik mest. Författarna till böckerna för årskurs 7 använde sig mer av jämförelser mellan språken än författarna till böckerna för årskurs 11. En slutsats som man kan dra av denna studie är att det är upp till författarna själva att bestämma i vilken mån de ska jämföra de två språken, eftersom läroplanen för ämnet engelska inte ger någon information om hur överföring ska hanteras i språkinlärning.

Nyckelord: Språköverföring, andraspråksinlärning, kontrastivt språkstudium
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1. Introduction and aim

Have you ever heard a Swede say things like this: “Now you are all out bicycling!” or “What is the fart limit here?” (Hultfors, 2003:25; 50). Do these utterances sound funny? Well, in English they might be unintelligible, but for a Swede they may sound perfectly all right. That is because if one translates them word by word these sentences correspond to common expressions in Swedish. Mistakes such as these are the result of translating expressions verbatim from Swedish into English, thinking that they will mean the same thing to a person who is not Swedish.

Mistakes such as the examples above are very common for second language learners no matter what language they are learning or what language they consider to be their first language (native language and mother-tongue are also common terms for first language). They are the result of transfer; a concept that means that one language is influencing the acquisition of another. Transfers such as the ones above may result in misunderstandings and misinterpretations. However, sometimes transfer can also be of help when trying to express oneself in a second language. Transfer that leads to misunderstandings or mistakes in the target language, the L2, is called negative transfer while transfer that is of help and benefit the acquisition of the L2 is deemed to be positive transfer. The effects of transfer in second and foreign language acquisition and language teaching have been widely researched over the years (Odlin, 1989:1; Kramsch, 2007:245).

Along with the research on transfer, researchers have asked themselves: Why are some languages easier to learn for some people than they are for others? Researchers have come to the conclusion that the closeness of the relationship between languages affects the learner’s ability to learn different languages. With languages that are closely related, the chances of positive transfer are higher due to the fact that those languages are more likely to have similar structures and share some features with each other. The opposite will most likely happen if the language that is learned, the L2, is not closely related to the language known from before, the L1 (Saville-Troike, 2012:187).

With reference to the relationship between languages one can look at Swedish and English, two Germanic languages within the same language family. Their relation is
relatively close, which means that they share a lot of common features with each other that will help in the acquisition of the other language. However, there are also differences between them, which may result in negative transfer. The awareness of positive and negative transfer can be of benefit for a teacher in order to successfully teach English in the Swedish classroom, as the teacher will be able to point out transfer that might be detrimental to their students (Odlin, 1989:4). Cook (2008:41) states that knowledge about languages and their structures might be beneficial to second language acquisition. In other words, knowledge about transfer and how it works is something that learners can benefit from when learning a language.

As a part of English teaching in the classroom, teachers can make use of several resources in order to help their students learn English. One such tool is the course book; course books are especially designed for the purpose of helping students to become proficient in a language. They have been created to include all of the core content as well as the aims for the subject English set out by the Swedish National Agency for Education, SNAE (Skolverket) in the curriculum.

The aim of this paper is to see to what extent aspects of transfer have been incorporated in books used for teaching English in Swedish schools. In order to do so, a number of books published in the last ten years were selected to see to what extent they make explicit and implicit comparisons between Swedish and English. Three books each from two school years, year 7 and year 11, were chosen with the aim to compare the two different proficiency levels and their focus on transfer (for information on how the books were selected, see Section 3.1). In other words this paper will investigate:

- To what extent is comparison of the two languages present in schoolbooks used over the last 10 years, both in regards to the amount of coverage and the type of commentary used, and is there a difference between books intended for compulsory school and for upper secondary school, respectively?

2. Background

In this section, transfer and interference will be defined and explained in Section 2.1. Special focus will be paid to positive and negative transfer in Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2,
respectively. In Section 2.2, a short survey of the relationship between Swedish and English will be presented. In Section 2.3, transfer on different levels, namely the phonological, grammatical, lexical and pragmatics level, will be explained and exemplified. The last Section, 2.4, will account for the curriculum in Swedish schools, with a focus on the place of transfer.

2.1 Transfer and interference

Previous research on transfer has focused on the definitions of transfer and interference (where interference roughly corresponds to negative transfer; see Section 2.1.1) as well as on how these two phenomena affect a learner’s language acquisition. Many studies have studied transfer in specific areas of language acquisition, such as a specific grammatical aspect or the production and perception of speech; many of them are also tied to specific languages (see Ard and Homburg (1992) on Spanish and Arabic speakers learning English, and Broselow (1992) on how two different dialects of Arabic can result in different English structures).

Another common research area is the difference between first and second language acquisition and how transfer functions within that area (Cook, 2008:6-13). The idea is that one of the major differences between first and second language acquisition is the fact that the learner has knowledge of another language when learning a second language, something that a first language learner does not have. The assumption is that this influences the acquisition of the second language and makes it different from the acquisition of the first language. Previous knowledge is transferred from the L1 to the L2 and it can be anything from the structure of a specific language to the general understanding of how language functions in society (Saville-Troike, 2012:18).

Transfer and interference, hence, occur when one language influences the acquisition of another language. Odlin (1989:27) explains transfer as “the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired.” O’Malley and Uhl Chamot (1995:148) say that transfer is a process where L2 learners use their L1 knowledge to develop their L2 language, and this transfer can be both supportive and detractive to their L2 acquisition. Interference can be described as transfer that has a negative influence on the L2, i.e. the interference hinders the “correct” use of the
target language (Saville-Troike, 2012:19,37). Interference is used as a different word for negative transfer, a term that will be further discussed in Section 2.1.2.

Language transfer was researched extensively in the 1970s and continued to be an area of interest in the 1980s, especially within the subject of second language acquisition, as it has been shown to be an important factor in second language acquisition (Odlin, 1989:3-4). Research shows that there is a correlation between the native language and other languages a learner possesses and the mistakes the learner makes in the target language. In other words, many of the mistakes made by learners of a language can be traced back to the parameters of the language or languages that the learner already knows (White, 1992:219; Broselow, 1992:84; Derakhshan and Karimi, 2015:2112).

However, this also means that not all mistakes made by learners are due to transfer. Depending on the speakers’ different native languages, the same mistake can have different explanations. For one native language, the explanation for the mistake might be transfer but for another language it might be something entirely different, according to Odlin (1989:19). Odlin uses the example of article omission by Spanish and Korean speakers learning English, and claims that these mistakes are the result of transfer for the Korean speakers but not for the Spanish speakers. Odlin also points out that not all mistakes made by learners are due to transfer, but that some might be developmental errors that occur even in first language acquisition (Odlin, 1989:19-20). Heny (1994:164-165) directs the attention to studies made within error analysis that demonstrate that transfer is not the only cause of learner mistakes.

Additionally, research has also shown that there is a connection between the rate and quality of acquisition and the relationship between the previously known language or languages and the target language (Odlin, 1989:40; Corder, 1992:21). Results from several studies show that the more closely related the already known language is to the one that the students are learning, the faster and easier they will learn that language (Corder, 1992:21). This means that for instance Spanish speakers learn English more easily and faster than Arabic speakers, but that German or Swedish speakers in turn learn English more easily and faster than Spanish speakers. The reason for this is that Spanish is closer in relation to English than Arabic is and that
German and Swedish are even closer to English than Spanish is. Consequently, if for instance, the target language was to change from English to Somali, Arabic speakers would learn Somali faster and easier than Spanish, German and Swedish speakers since Arabic is closer to Somali than the other languages are.

2.1.1 Positive transfer
As pointed out above, when the known language is close in relation to the language being acquired it is more likely that positive transfer occurs. Positive transfer is when aspects of a language a learner knows from before can help and support the acquisition of another language (White, 1992:219). Cook (2008:13) states that the reason for this is because the target language shares common features with the L1. Aspects such as similarities between the vocabularies of the languages can make reading comprehension of the target language develop faster (Odlin, 1989:36). If a structure or a feature of the L2 is the same as in the L1, there is no need to learn anything new (Saville-Troike, 2012:19), hence the acquisition of the L2 will be easier and faster.

2.1.2 Negative transfer
The opposite of positive transfer is negative transfer. As mentioned earlier, negative transfer means that transfer from another language hinders or disrupts the acquisition of the target language. The result of negative transfer is an L2 utterance that is inappropriate or “wrong” (Saville-Troike, 2012:19). This can create complications and misunderstandings when conversing with native speakers of the L2 if for instance a learner of a language uses phrases and structures from his or her native language when speaking the target language (Saville-Troike, 2012:162). The utterance, although correct according to the norms of the native language, might instead be considered rude in the target language due to the different norms of discourse in that language (Saville-Troike, 2012:162). Negative transfer can occur when there is great distance in relation between the language already known and the language that is being learned (White, 1992:219), in other words the languages would most likely share very few features with each other that can be of help to learners in their acquisition.
2.2 The relationship between Swedish and English

In this section the relationship between languages will be examined more closely and the focus will be on the relationship between Swedish and English. Furthermore, this section will discuss some of the different ways that Swedish and English have influenced each other at various points in time.

Fennell (2001:19) uses the metaphor of biological family relations when describing the relationship between languages. Just as one might resemble a family member in the immediate family more than a cousin or someone that is a distant relative, languages also resemble each other more the more closely related they are to each other. When looking at resemblances with other families or even other species, similarities that are found are more likely to be there by chance than anything else, just as with languages from different language families. The world’s languages can thus be divided into language families (Fennell, 2001:19). However, not all similarities between languages are due to family relationships. Some can also be the result of contact between the speakers of the languages, through for instance borrowing of words (Fennell, 2001:20).

In the case of languages influencing one another, there are several different ways that this can happen, since not all language contact is the same (Fennell, 2001:87). When looking at Swedish and English, their separate language histories have crossed paths on many occasions. Both Swedish and English belong to the Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family. In other words, both languages have the same origin. (The Indo-European language tree and the relations between English and Swedish can be seen in Figure 1.)
Since their separation, the two languages have come in contact with each other on many occasions. Perhaps the strongest contact was during the Viking Age, a period from the middle of the eighth century to the middle of the eleventh century (Fennell, 2001:58). At this time the Scandinavian languages, brought by the Vikings, influenced the English language in a number of ways. Examples of their influence can be seen in words like skin and skirt, where the /sk/ pronunciation is the result of the influence of Old Norse on English, whereas native words such as shin and shirt have /ʃ/ in modern English (Fennell, 2001:91). Words originating in the Scandinavian languages that were adopted into English were very basic words that were used every day, as a result of the close contact between the people at that time (Fennell, 2001:90-91). However, the Scandinavian influence can also be seen in function words like pronouns, prepositions and adverbs, a possibly unique example being the borrowing of the pronouns they, them and their (Fennell, 2001:91-92).

Due to the fact that the two languages share the same origin and that they have influenced each other in their development, they share many common features with each other, features that can be very helpful in a Swedish speaker’s acquisition of English or an English speaker’s acquisition of Swedish. Hence, learners can take advantage of the great deal of positive transfer available to them. Still, there are many differences between the languages that can cause problems for a learner. The
different types of negative transfer that Swedish learners of English may encounter will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

2.3 The different levels of transfer
A lot of research has been done when it comes to the mistakes that are most frequently made by learners of English. Derakhshan and Karimi (2015:2112-2113) claim that transfer can appear on all levels of language acquisition including habits, meaning and culture. Because of the close relation between the languages, Swedish speakers can get a lot of help from positive transfer when learning English. However, there are cases where the two languages differ in their structures. Presented below are the levels of linguistic transfer with examples of where Swedish learners of English may encounter difficulties.

2.3.1 Phonological transfer
Phonological transfer occurs in both perception and production of the L2 according to Saville-Troike (2012:151). While certain sounds are commonly found in many languages, others are not (Odlin, 1989:120). The perception and production of sounds within a language have been shown to contribute to both positive and negative transfer in language acquisition. Sounds and patterns that are similar or the same in the L2 as in the L1 do not cause a problem for learners, while sounds that are different or do not exist in the L1 will cause the learner to appear to have a “foreign accent” (Cook, 2008:76). When it comes to Swedish and English, one of the differences between the sounds in the languages is the sound /z/. The sound /z/ is hard for Swedish learners since there is no corresponding sound in Swedish (Estling Vannestål, 2015:117). Kramsch (2007:243) explains this difficulty by stating that if the L1 does not have a phoneme that corresponds to a phoneme in the L2, the learner will have problems with both the pronunciation and the perception of this phoneme. But it is not just the perception and production of phonemes that is an issue in phonological transfer. Intonation patterns can cause misunderstandings and misinterpretations if the pattern of the L2 is different from the L1 (Cook, 2008:83-84). Transfer of intonation patterns is transfer on a phonological level but the misinterpretations it can lead to can also be seen as transfer on the pragmatic level, which will be discussed more in Section 2.3.4.
2.3.2 Grammatical transfer
The grammatical structure of a language might be one of the hardest things for a learner to learn, especially if the grammatical structure of his or her L1 is transferred onto the L2. On many accounts, the transferred structure will sound correct to the learner because they are used to that structure in their L1. Simpson, Ekenstam and Ernolv (1973:93) bring this up when discussing the difference in the use of singular and plural in Swedish and English. Expressions such as shake hands and to be friends are frequently incorrectly produced by Swedish learners, because in Swedish the nouns are in the singular form. That produces errors such as *shake hand and *to be friend. Simpson et al. (1973:95-97) also give examples of differences between uncountable nouns in Swedish and English, something that Estling Vannestål (2015:110) says is difficult for Swedish learners of English. An example of a noun that is uncountable in English but not in Swedish is furniture = ‘möbel’. It is grammatically correct to say ‘en möbel, flera möbler’ in Swedish, but incorrect to say *a furniture, several furnitures in English. The correct form in English is instead a piece of furniture, several pieces of furniture.

Obviously, it is not only in the matter of singular and plural that Swedish learners of English can transfer Swedish structures onto English. Transfer can be seen in many different areas of grammar, for instance in the correct use of verb tenses, something that is difficult, since the rules are different in Swedish than in English (Estling Vannestål, 2015:197:205). Another issue is the use of prepositions, when the preposition used in English does not correspond to the preposition used in Swedish (Simpson et al. 1973:100-101).

2.3.3 Lexical transfer
When talking about lexical transfer, Simpson et al. (1973) use various terms to classify the different types of transfer that can occur. True and false friends refer to words that either mean the same thing in English as the Swedish words they resemble, true friends, or English words that look like Swedish words but mean something different, false friends (Simpson et al. 1973:11-12). Some examples of false friends are semester (Eng. ‘a term of the school year’, Sw. =‘vacation’/’holiday’), to be lame (Eng. ‘not able to walk properly because of an injury or illness’, Sw. lam = ‘paralyzed’) or morning coats (Eng. ‘formal clothes for men’, Sw. morgenrock=‘dressing-gown’). True friends that are found in two languages can be
helpful for learners; in other words, they can be considered positive transfer of the L1 to the L2. False friends, however, are words that can cause much trouble, resulting in negative transfer to the L2.

However, there are a number of words that can be considered to result in both negative and positive transfer. Simpson et al. (1973:61) refer to them as sometime friends. It is quite common for English to have several words for something that Swedish only has one word for. Frequently, one of those words will resemble the Swedish word but not the other or others. Swedish learners usually overuse this word, while in reality another word is needed. The word that bears resemblance to the Swedish word is only a sometime friend. Estling Vannestål (2015:185) uses the example of shall which is very similar to the Swedish words skall and ska, but it is not always correct to use shall when Swedish uses skall or ska.

### 2.3.4 Pragmatic transfer

Pragmatic transfer refers to the transfer of meaning that can occur when learning a language. As brought up in Section 2.3.1, transfer of intonation patterns can result in misunderstandings and misinterpretations. That is, the intended meaning will not be correctly expressed because of interference from the L1 (Saville-Troike, 2012:177). An example of this is the intonation pattern in English wh-questions. Non-native speakers tend to end these kinds of questions with a rising tone; however, in English, wh-questions are pronounced with a falling tone, the same as in statements (Rönnerdal & Johansson, 2005:111). Another example of pragmatic transfer is for instance at a store where the cashier says, “Welcome back!” to a customer that just finished his or her purchase and is about to leave. In Swedish this is a way of saying “thank you, please come back again.” An English speaker would find saying “welcome back!” odd, as they would only say that to someone that just entered.¹

### 2.4 Language learning and transfer in the Swedish curriculum

English is taught as a foreign language in Swedish schools. It is one of the core subjects, which means that it is an obligatory subject that has to be taken in all the years of compulsory school. It is also mandatory to take at least two courses in English no matter what program students attend in upper secondary school. Furthermore, without passing English in compulsory school a student will not be

¹ Solveig Granath, personal communication
qualified to continue to the upper secondary school’s different programs. In order for teachers to successfully teach English to their students they need to be aware of the challenges that they might face and how to help their students to overcome them (Kramsch, 2007:242).

The Swedish National Agency for Education (SNAE) is the government agency in charge of the curriculum for both compulsory school and upper secondary school. The curriculum is written with the purpose of being a guideline for teachers in order for the schools in Sweden to be equal. The curriculum for compulsory school and upper secondary school states the following:

From the curriculum for compulsory school (years 1-9):

Communication skills also cover confidence in using the language and the ability to use different strategies to support communication and solve problems when language skills by themselves are not sufficient. (Skolverket, 2011)

Teaching should [...] convey the benefits of language skills and knowledge. (Skolverket, 2011)

From the curriculum for upper secondary school (years 10-12):

students should be given the opportunity to develop their ability to use different strategies to support communication and to solve problems when language skills are inadequate. (Skolverket, 2013)

Teaching should [...] give them the opportunity to develop plurilingualism where skills in different languages interact and support each other. (Skolverket, 2013)

Even though the curricula do not explicitly use the words transfer and interference, they do say that teachers should make students aware of how knowledge in different languages can support and interact with each other, a comment that can be connected to the benefits of positive transfer. In order for teachers to make use of transfer in second language teaching, students need to be aware of the concept of transfer and how it can affect their acquisition of English in both positive and negative ways. By knowing this, they will also be able to create strategies for how to use English in a situation when their individual language skills are not sufficient. In other words, knowledge of transfer will help students to learn how the English language works and how to use it. Cook (2008:41) says that knowledge of what to
expect from the L2 will make the students more receptive to it, something that supports the aims set down by the SNAE, that having students obtaining knowledge about languages is something to strive for.

3. Methods
This section will account for the materials and methods used to reach the aim of this paper, to investigate if notions of transfer have been incorporated in course books published in the last 10 years, with a focus on two years, the 7th grade and the 11th grade. The material will be presented in Section 3.1 and the methods used will be presented in Section 3.2. Section 3.3 will discuss the delimitations of the study.

3.1. Material
The primary sources used in this study are English course books published in the last 10 years. The books were chosen out of convenience. They were the most recently published course books that were found at a community library. Books from year 7 and year 11 were chosen in order to compare two different school levels in Sweden (year 7 is a year in compulsory school and year 11 in upper secondary school). Preferably, the books chosen for this study should be the course books most widely used in Swedish schools today. However, it may very well be the case that some books in this study are not used in more than a few schools. Unfortunately, because of time issues and difficulties with finding course books to study it was not possible to find out to what extent the six course books are used in schools today.

3.1.1 Year 7 books
Output

Output (Johansson, Ornblad & Stephens, 2014) is a teaching tool that is divided into two books, a textbook and a workbook. It is also an appliance that has interactive counterparts, meaning that it is possible to use a completely digital version of it. However, the printed books are not complete; the digital version functions as a complement to the printed books. The digital version contains more exercises and the only grammar section that is present in the Output-series can be found in the digital version. That means that students using Output as their course book need to have access to the digital version as well in order to have access to all the material. Because
of this, the present study has also looked at the digital version with a focus on the particular sections not available in the printed version.

The textbook has 136 pages and is divided into 5 units, each unit with a number of different texts that follow from the theme of the unit. One of the texts in each unit is about an English-speaking country in the world. At the end of each unit the students are given a dialogue to work in pairs with as well as a list of expressions that were present in the texts of the unit. Each text also comes with its own glossary.

The workbook contains 160 pages and is divided into the same units as the textbook. The exercises in each unit are related to the different texts in the corresponding unit in the textbook. The exercises for each text are of two different kinds: the first is input, exercises designed to help the students understand the texts. Next is output, exercises where the students are asked to produce something, like writing a text of some kind or work orally with a friend in a discussion. Each unit also has a listening section where the students are asked to listen to a recording and answer questions about it. The listening sections also contain the lyrics of a song with accompanying exercises and each unit also talks about one kind of writing genre, for instance summary. Instructions on how to write in each specific genre are given to the students along with a writing exercise. The grammar section is only found in the digital version of the teaching appliance.

Happy

The teaching aid Happy (Peterson, Sutcliffe, Johansson & Bergman, 2012) consists of two books, a textbook and a workbook. The authors have chosen to use green boxes throughout the book to draw the students’ attention to important information or details that can help them with the exercises they are given. The majority of these green boxes can be found in the grammar section.

The textbook contains 136 pages and is divided into 10 chapters and each of them contains texts on three different levels of difficulty. They are classified as A, B or C; A being the easiest level and C the hardest. All of them deal with the theme of the chapter. The texts come with their own glossaries and each chapter ends with
something different, for instance a poem, a comic strip or a “test what kind of person you are”-quiz.

The workbook has 144 pages and is divided up the same way as the textbook, with exercises on three different levels of difficulty that each connects to the texts found in the textbook. The chapters start with a few exercises that check the students’ understanding of the introductory text to each chapter and each A level section contains a listening exercise.

The last section of the workbook is a grammar section. Here the students are informed about different grammatical concepts and provided with exercises to help them practice the grammar they have just been taught. The very last page of the book contains two green boxes, one with the phonetic alphabet and the second one with the English alphabet and how it is pronounced. This section of the book is in Swedish while the rest of the book is in English.

**Wings**

*Wings* (Glover, Glover, Hedberg, Malmberg, Mellerby & Rinnesjö, 2008) is a teaching aid in two parts, one textbook, 159 pages, and one workbook, 167 pages. The textbook is divided into six sections, each with a number of texts on the same theme as the section. Each text is also accompanied by its own glossary. At the beginning of each section there is an overview of what can be found in the textbook as well as in the workbook.

The workbook is divided into the same sections as the textbook and the exercises are connected to the theme of the section. Some exercises are also connected directly to a text in the textbook. Each section has 5-7 parts. Sections 1 and 2 contain the parts *words and phrases, reading, speaking, writing, listening, extras* and *grammar*. Sections 3-5 have the same parts except for the *extras*, and Section 6 does not have a *grammar*-part. The *extras* section includes extra discussion tasks and assignments for students after they have finished the other exercises. A separate grammar section and dictionary along with tips and tricks to help the students work with texts etc. are located at the end of the book. The pages where the grammar is in the workbook have been color-coded; in the chapters, the grammar is printed on yellow paper, and the
grammar at the end of the book is printed on blue paper. The dictionary part that contains information about phonetics, differences between the measuring units etc. appears on dark blue pages. All grammar parts of the book are in Swedish while the rest of the book is in English.

To summarize, the course books for year 7 all consist of a textbook and a workbook. Apart from Output, which had its grammar section in the digital version, the course books had a grammar section at the end of the workbook. All three books were divided into different sections or units that each had texts and exercises in line with the theme of the section or unit.

3.1.2. Year 11 books

Worldwide English

The all-in-one course book Worldwide English (Johansson, Tuthill & Hörmander, 2014) is 406 pages long and divided into 25 chapters. Each chapter comes with a text, a vocabulary list and accompanying exercises. At least one of the exercises in each chapter deals with a grammatical concept such as the use of the ing-form or phrasal verbs. Each chapter also includes at least one listening, writing and speaking exercise. Chapters 11-15 are dedicated to literature; they have excerpts from classical books and exercises connected to the excerpts. There is also a poetry section at the end of the literature chapters. The last pages of the book contain information for the students on how to write different kinds of text, lists of useful phrases and linking words for both writing and speaking, and an alphabetical wordlist. Worldwide English is a course book aimed at the preparatory programs in upper secondary school.

Pick & Mix

Pick & Mix (Phillips & Phillips, 2015) is an all-in-one course book that has 256 pages and is divided into ten chapters. The chapters are in their turn divided into five parts which aim to help the students develop their skills in reading, listening, speaking, writing and grammar. The reading part has one or two texts and includes exercises on

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2 Upper secondary school offers vocational programs and preparatory programs. Students in vocational programs are able to start working as soon as they finish their program while preparatory programs prepare students for higher education.
the text or texts. The exercises in the other parts are not connected directly to the texts but rather to the theme of the chapter. Glossary lists can be found both with the texts and in the listening part to help the students with the exercises.

The last section of the book is called Extra. In this section the students can find information on how to write different kinds of text as well as tips on how to give a presentation etc. It also contains information on pronunciation and the phonetic alphabet. Pick & Mix is a course book aimed at the vocational programs in upper secondary school.

**Context**

*Context* (Cutler & Holmberg, 2012) is 384 pages long all-in-one course book and is divided into five different sections: *texts and exercises, resource pages, grammar, literature and word lists*. Little boxes called *deep focus* appear throughout the book. In them the students are given extra or “deeper” information on certain things.

The *texts and exercises* section consists of 15 chapters, each with a text and exercises on the text. There is also at least one listening, writing and speaking exercise in each chapter. In the *resource pages* students can find information on everything from how to write different types of texts to how to be critical of information found on the Internet. These pages also include tasks for the students in order to work with the concepts that the book just presented. The *grammar section* is divided into chapters, each chapter on one particular word class. The students are provided with definitions of the different grammatical concepts and with exercises to help the students practice the use of the grammatical concepts. The *literature section* presents different authors and poets as well as some short extracts from their works. The *word lists* provide glossaries for all the texts in the texts and exercises section as well as in the literature section. *Context* is a course book aimed at the preparatory programs in upper secondary school.

Altogether, the year 11 course books are all all-in-one books with different sections or chapters. The sections or chapters include texts and exercises that follow a specific theme. Two of the books have parts specifically dedicated to grammar; in one book (*Worldwide English*), the grammar exercises are integrated in the other tasks.
Worldwide English and Context were written for the preparatory programs in upper secondary school, while Pick & Mix is supposed to be used in the vocational programs.

3.2 Methods

The concept of transfer is something that in itself is not taught to students. As mentioned in Section 2.1, transfer is not the only cause of learner mistakes. That means that one cannot just look at a mistake and immediately state that this mistake is the result of interference from the L1. The fact that transfer is a concept of abstract nature makes it almost impossible to find, identify and predict. So in order to determine the role of transfer in English course books there is a need to operationalize the concept. In this study, this will be done by identifying all places where there is explicit or implicit comparison between English and Swedish in the teaching aids. This means that the findings that are presented in the results have been carefully considered in order to determine whether the authors have wanted the students to pay extra attention to the similarities and differences between the languages. Careful consideration was given to these findings since the authors’ intentions cannot be determined. The difficulties with identifying transfer and the authors’ intentions will be further discussed below.

The first step, in order to find out whether or not transfer is present in course books, was to look for evidence of where the authors gave any indication of differences or similarities between Swedish and English to the students. Any formulations such as In English..., Swedish uses this... but English uses... or the use of... in English is similar to Swedish... were looked for. Expressions such as these might make the students start thinking of differences and similarities between Swedish and English, meaning that they can make the students aware of transfer that can occur. In the quantitative results, such explicit comparison between English and Swedish is divided into three different groups. The first group includes those cases that only contained references to how a concept is used in English, such as “In English it... “, the second group contains those cases which refer to how something is used in Swedish, and the third group comprises cases where there is a comparison between Swedish and English, such as “Swedish uses... but English uses...”
The glossaries of the course books were analyzed separately. The comparison was based on whether or not the glossaries include any reference to true friends, false friends or sometime friends. Words which for Swedish speakers are in fact true, false and sometime friends are found in the glossaries, but they are only included in this study if the authors have marked them in any way to make them stand out compared to the other words. The study also included instances when glossaries list words that have several equivalents even if they do not use the term sometime friend. Some examples from the course book Output are neat = ‘prydnlig, ordentlig’ or upon=on = ‘på’. (Textbook, p. 64; 38) The example draw = (here): ‘spela oavgjort’ (from Happy, Textbook, p. 33) is another example of two or more words in Swedish that have the same equivalent in English, only here the authors have not listed the other equivalents. This part of the study was not quantified due to the differences between the glossary lists in the course books (see Section 3.2.3).

The next step was to look for any instances where the authors implicitly pointed to similarities or differences between the languages without actually using the expressions above. One example of an implicit reference to a difference between Swedish and English is from the book Happy where in an exercise the students are asked to write down the days of the week. The sentence “Note that they are all written with capital letters (stor bokstav)” (Workbook, p. 9) was added to the exercise. Here the authors point to a difference between Swedish and English of how to write the days of the week without explicitly stating that there is a difference. Another example of implicit reference is from Pick & Mix where the students are informed of the use of collective nouns: “Collective nouns are words that describe a collection of things that are counted as a whole, such as team and group. Many collective nouns are used in the singular, but can also be used in the plural, depending on whether the collection is mostly seen as a whole (verb in the singular) or mostly as a set of individuals (verb in plural) in the specific context.” (p. 27). Here the authors make a description of how collective nouns are used in English without explicitly mentioning the language and without pointing out that this is not a problem in Swedish, since in Swedish the verb form is the same regardless of whether the subject is in the singular or the plural.
As a last step, the linguistic level to which each case belonged (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, pragmatics) was determined. The method that was used for this is described in Sections 3.2.1-3.2.4.

3.2.1 Identifying explicit and implicit comparison of pronunciation

References to comparison of phonology and pronunciation were looked for primarily in the sections of the book where phonological concepts such as the phonetic alphabet or stress patterns were mentioned or explained to the students. *Pick & Mix*, for instance, had such a section at the end of the book. However, especially in books that did not have a section on phonology, exercises and texts in the books were also examined to see if the authors have provided the students with information on possible phonological transfer. One example from *Happy* can be used to illustrate this, where the students were given a number of word pairs, such as *this-these* and *it-eat*, and then asked the question: “What is the difference in the pronunciation (uttal) of these word pairs?” (Workbook, p. 10).

3.2.2 Identifying explicit and implicit comparison of grammar

The grammar sections of the course books as well as the different exercises that dealt with grammatical concepts were examined when looking for how grammar was presented in the course books. What were looked for were comparisons between how grammatical concepts function in Swedish and in English. An example of an instruction for the *do*-construction that was included in the study is from *Output*: “It’s not always possible to translate a sentence word for word into English. You have to use the *do*-construction” (Digital book, grammar Section 9).

3.2.3 Identifying explicit and implicit comparison of vocabulary

When looking for references to lexical transfer in course books the main focus was on the wordlists that accompanied the texts in the books. Due to the fact that there was such great variation between the books in the number of words included in the wordlists the results of the survey of the glossaries have not been quantified; instead, the presence vs. absence of various ways of presenting vocabulary to students was determined (see Table 4 in Section 4.4). However, indications of comparisons of vocabulary were also looked for outside of the wordlists in exercises and lists of useful phrases and expressions provided by the authors. The lists of useful phrases and expressions were only included in this study if the authors had included the Swedish
equivalents of the phrases and expressions. These findings were quantified and these results are presented in Tables 1-3 in Section 4.1.

3.2.4 Identifying explicit and implicit comparison of information on pragmatics

Comparison of information on pragmatics could not be limited to specific sections or areas of the books. The comparisons of pragmatics could instead be found throughout the books. However, they were found primarily in pair-exercises where the students were asked to practice their use of English in a set situation. In Wings, for instance, there is an exercise, which says: “It is good to be able to describe what people look like. Here you will do this. Look at the words ‘Describing people’ on p. 40 in your textbook. You will find useful words and phrases here” (Workbook, p.40). Exercises such as the example above teach students what phrases to use in specific situations. The example from Wings shows an implicit reference to the difference in language use between Swedish and English. Context gives an example of an explicit reference to the difference in language use with an instruction to the students of how the incorrect use of language might cause misinterpretations by the recipient (p.26).

3.3 Delimitations

The focus of this study is on similarities and differences between the languages explicitly pointed out by the authors, as in the expressions above, or where the authors have implicitly pointed to them. For that reason, some translation exercises were excluded from this study. Although lexical transfer can occur when these expressions are translated, not all of the exercises have indications from the authors that mistakes can be made that are due to transfer. An example of an expression that can cause transfer is the sentence: She lives in a broken home, which means that she lives in a home that is not good for her (a direct translation of Swedish is ‘Hon bor i ett trasigt hem’ which means that the house she lives in is broken/not whole).

An example of a translation exercise that is included in the study comes from Happy: “Translate the phrases into English. The English phrases are all in the textbook (pp. 20-22)” (Workbook, p. 20). Here the authors give the students the clue that the expressions can be found in a text in the course book. The students will then get the expressions in a context and are more likely to see that this way of expressing oneself
is similar to, or different from, the way they express themselves in their native language.

The decision to what kind of exercises to include in this study was not easy to make. The exercises had to be gone through several times in order to determine which of them included explicit, implicit or no references at all to differences and similarities between Swedish and English. This means that the decision which cases to include was to a certain extent subject, and another person might not have selected exactly the same exercises.

4. Results
In this section, a survey of the quantitative results of the study will be presented in Section 4.1, and the following sections will account for the results for each linguistic level (Sections 4.2-4.5). A summary of the results can be found in Section 4.6.

4.1 Survey of results
The results of the findings of both explicit and implicit comparisons can be seen in Table 1. Table 2 shows the number of occurrences of explicit and implicit comparison for the four linguistic levels, and Table 3 shows the number of occurrences for each linguistic level in the six course books.
Table 1: Frequency of occurrence in the course books of explicit and implicit comparison of similarities and differences between the languages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Explicit reference to English only</th>
<th>Explicit reference to Swedish only</th>
<th>Explicit reference to English and Swedish</th>
<th>Total (Explicit references)</th>
<th>Implicit mention of differences and similarities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wings</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldwide English</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick &amp; Mix</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 1 shows, implicit mentions of differences and similarities between Swedish and English were more common than explicit mentions in the books for year 7, whereas in the year 11 books explicit mentions of differences and similarities between the languages were more common than implicit references. The most common way for the authors to show explicit comparison between the languages are by using both English and Swedish as a way of comparing the way that the languages functions. Furthermore, the authors used information on how English works in order to point to differences and similarities between Swedish and English. What Table 1 also shows is that differences and similarities between the languages are mentioned more in the books for year 7 than in the books for year 11, as the year 7 books have a total of 132 references to differences and similarities between Swedish and English, while the year 11 books only have 69.

Table 2: Quantitative results of explicit and implicit comparison for the four linguistic levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Grammar*</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Pragmatics</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicit comparison</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implicit comparison</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Spelling is included in the grammar section in one of the course books; therefore, differences and similarities of spelling are included in the grammar results.
Table 2 shows that grammar was the most common linguistic level where comparison was made, followed by vocabulary, pragmatics and pronunciation.

Table 3: Quantitative results of the comparison found in each book for the four linguistic levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Pragmatics</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wings</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldwide English</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick &amp; Mix</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 presents the results for each linguistic level for the six books examined in this study. Wings is the book that had the largest number overall. Table 3 also shows that grammatical comparison is the most common linguistic level of comparison between the languages in both the books for year 7 and year 11.

4.2 Pronunciation

Section 4.2 will report the findings of comparison of pronunciation between Swedish and English in the year 7 books (Section 4.2.1) and year 11 books (Section 4.2.2). A comparison of the comparison of pronunciation in the year 7 books and the year 11 books can be seen in Section 4.2.3.

4.2.1 Pronunciation in course books for year 7

References to pronunciation in course books for year 7 varied between the books that were studied. Output contained no reference to phonetics at all, while Happy and Wings each had a short section on phonetic writing and the phonetic alphabet. Wings’ phonetic section included a definition of what a diphthong is. With this definition the authors implicitly highlight the difference between English and Swedish when it comes to diphthongs, namely that English has them but idiomatic Swedish does not.

Happy was the only book that had exercises where the students were able to practice pronunciation and phonetic writing. However, these exercises were not part of the phonetic section of the book; instead each chapter had a pronunciation or phonetics
exercise. One of the exercises that explicitly pointed to differences between English and Swedish was an exercise that explained to the students that English has many words that are pronounced the same but have different meanings and spellings. Implicit references to differences between the languages were found in other exercises that had the students practice sounds that can be difficult for Swedish learners of English, e.g. the difference between /e/ and /æ/ (Workbook, p. 31).

4.2.2 Pronunciation in course books for year 11
References to pronunciation in course books for year 11 were absent in both Context and Worldwide English. Worldwide English only has a small box with the phonetic symbols at the beginning of the alphabetic wordlist at the end of the book. Pick & Mix, however, has a section which deals with phonetics and this section discusses differences and similarities between English and Swedish.

4.2.3 A comparison of pronunciation in course books for year 7 and year 11
In general, references to pronunciation were scarce in both the books for year 7 and year 11; in fact it was the kind of comparison that was least commonly found. The fact that phonetics seems to be an area that is not always included in the course books suggests that this is an area that is not considered important by most authors. Therefore we can see a difference in how phonetics and pronunciation is dealt with in the different course books.

4.3 Grammar
This section will account for the grammatical comparisons found in the books for year 7 (Section 4.3.1) and year 11 (Section 4.3.2). Section 4.3.3 will summarize how grammatical comparison was dealt with on the different proficiency levels.

4.3.1 Grammar in course books for year 7
All three course books for year 7 had specific grammar sections with exercises and explanations of grammatical concepts. Output had its grammar section in the digital version, which was different from the other books that had them in the printed books. Comparisons between grammatical concepts in Swedish and English could be found in the grammar sections of the books, and when they did, they always occurred when a grammatical concept was explained and exemplified. Most common were references where the authors explicitly pointed to the differences between the
languages. However, mention of how it works in English without any reference to Swedish was also common. This can be illustrated by the following examples from Happy: “I svensk använd vi en/ett. I engelskan använd vi a/an” (Workbook, p. 112) (‘In Swedish we use en/ett. In English we use a/an’) and “Genitiv beskriver ägande. I engelskan kan man bilda genitiv på två olika sätt.” (‘The genitive describes ownership. In English the genitive can be expressed in two different ways’) (my translation).

A big difference between the books Happy and Wings compared to Output was that the grammar sections were in Swedish in Happy and Wings while they were in English in Output. The choice of language might not make much difference when it comes to the comparisons that are being made; however, the use of Swedish might possibly make the authors’ references to differences and similarities easier to understand for the students.

None of the books analyzed in this study had grammar exercises outside the grammar sections. Comparisons of grammatical concepts in the languages were thus only found in the grammar sections in the books. The comparisons were all part of the explanations of the different grammatical concepts.

4.3.2 Grammar in course books for year 11
Of the three books for year 11 that were examined in this study, only Pick & Mix and Context had sections devoted only to grammar. Worldwide English had exercises where grammatical concepts were covered, but it did not contain any information that explained the use of these concepts. Of the comparisons between the languages that could be found in the grammar sections, most included explicit comparison between Swedish and English such as “In Swedish there are two ways of forming the passive, in English there is one” (from Context, p. 300). Context stood out from the other books by containing a description of how a grammatical concept is dealt with in Swedish without any mention of how the same concept works in English: “The relative pronouns refer back to something that has already been mentioned. In Swedish we most often use the word ‘som’” (p. 278).

Comparisons could also be seen in some of the grammar exercises in the books, as for instance in an exercise in Worldwide English, where the students are asked to think
about the many different translations of the Swedish word *skulle*. “The Swedish word *skulle* has several English translations. Choose the best *skulle* for each phrase. Choose between:

a) skulle (corresponding to *will*)

b) skulle, tänkte, ämnade; skulle snart

c) skulle till att, just skulle

d) skulle (according to a plan, timetable)” (p.106)

Overall, most of the comparisons between Swedish and English, when it came to grammar, could be found in the explanations of grammatical concepts, and explicit comparison was the most common way for the authors to point out differences and similarities between the languages.

**4.3.3 A comparison of grammar in course books for year 7 and year 11**

Grammatical comparisons were most commonly found in the grammar sections of the books; this was true for all the books in this study except for one that did not have a grammar section (*Worldwide English*). Another thing that all the books (except *Worldwide English*) had in common was that the comparisons were found in the explanations of the grammatical concepts. In other words, there was not a large difference in the way grammatical differences were treated in the books for the two school years.

Grammatical comparisons were also the most common type of comparison in any of the books. Almost 65% of the grammatical comparisons were explicit comparisons, where the authors explicitly mentioned how a grammatical concept worked in either both or one of the languages (see Table 2).

**4.4 Vocabulary**

The results from the glossaries have not been quantified due to the fact that the glossaries look different in every book since they are based on different texts. The glossaries of the books are neither of equal length nor do they include the same words. A survey of the results can be seen in Table 4.
Table 4: Results from the examination of the glossaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>True friend</th>
<th>False friend</th>
<th>Sometime friend</th>
<th>Two words corresponding to one English word</th>
<th>Two words corresponding to one Swedish word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wings</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldwide English</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick &amp; Mix</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No*</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*False friends are covered in Context in the resource pages

Table 4 tells us that only Wings showed a reference to sometime friends. However, although the term sometime friend was not used, four of the books included in the wordlists words that can have more than one equivalent in the two languages.

4.4.1 Vocabulary in course books for year 7

References to similarities and differences outside of the wordlists could be found in exercises that asked the students to translate phrases and expressions with the help of the texts in the course books or other exercises in the workbooks. Furthermore, Wings also had boxes with useful phrases and expressions where the students could learn useful phrases in English and their equivalents in Swedish. The quantified results of this can be seen in Tables 1-3 (Section 4.1).

None of the wordlists in the course books for year 7 had any kind of reference to true, false or sometime friends except for one reference in the book Wings (Textbook, p. 39). There, a translation of the expression bare waist was given as ‘bar midja’, and the authors also distinctly called the attention to the fact that in Swedish the most common translation is ‘bar mage’. Although ‘bar midja’ is the direct translation of bare waist, it is only a sometime friend since in most situations the translation ‘bar mage’ is more suitable. The wordlists of the books did, however, include a number of instances where individual words have been given several equivalents in the other language. This gives the impression that the authors consider it important for the students to know that not all words have only one corresponding equivalent.
4.4.2 Vocabulary in course books for year 11

When it comes to references to lexical transfer outside of the wordlists, the course book *Context* provides the students with an explanation and examples of *false friends* on the resource pages (p. 232). The book also directs the students to exercises about false friends that can be found on the *Student’s Web*, a component of the book where students can find more texts and exercises connected to the printed book. The fact that the authors have a specific section called “False friends” shows that they consider knowledge about the occurrence of false friends as beneficial to the students’ acquisition of English.

*Pick & Mix* had, like the year 7 book *Wings*, boxes with useful expressions and phrases with their Swedish equivalents. Other exercises that make use of comparison between Swedish and English are translation exercises where the students are asked to find the equivalents of the expressions in either Swedish or English with the help of phrases and expressions given to the students in other exercises.

The wordlists in the course books for year 11 did not contain any reference to *true*, *false* or *sometime friends*. However, as in the year 7 books, they did include several equivalents for the same word, indicating that the authors consider it important for the students to know that words do not always have only one corresponding translation.

4.4.3 A comparison of vocabulary in course books for year 7 and year 11

Comparison on the lexical level was the second most common type of comparison that was found in the books examined in this study. One book from each year stood out by having boxes of useful phrases and expressions which make explicit contrasts between English and Swedish (*Wings* and *Pick & Mix*); otherwise, the way that comparison of vocabulary was presented was similar for both the year 7 and year 11 books.

The wordlists were also similar in all books covered in this study. Four of them had no reference to *true*, *false* and *sometime friends*, while the books *Wings* and *Context* both had one exception that made them stand out from the rest. *Context* had a
section that explained the concept of *false friends*, and *Wings* had a reference to a *sometime friend* in its glossary.

### 4.5 Information on pragmatics

Section 4.5 is divided into three sections. Section 4.5.1 accounts for the findings of comparison of pragmatics between Swedish and English in the books aimed at year 7, while Section 4.5.2 accounts for the findings in the year 11 books. Section 4.5.3 compares the findings in Section 4.5.1 and Section 4.5.2.

#### 4.5.1 Information on pragmatics in course books for year 7

Comparisons of how language use differs in context between Swedish and English were very few in *Output* and *Happy* but a lot more common in *Wings*. *Wings* included many exercises where the students were asked to create dialogues for specific situations and where they were told to use the texts and the boxes of useful phrases and expressions to find inspiration and ideas of how to write their dialogues. Many times they were also asked to act out the dialogues together with a friend. An example of such an exercise is when the students are asked to practice giving directions: “Work with a partner. Use the map on pp.110-111 in your Textbook. Decide where you are on the map, and where you would like to go. Write dialogues. There are helpful phrases on p. 107 in your Textbook” (from *Wings*, Workbook, p. 116). Exercises such as the ones that can be found in *Wings* does not only help the students to learn vocabulary, but also to learn what expressions to use in specific contexts.

#### 4.5.2 Information on pragmatics in course books for year 11

Comparisons of language use were only found in three places in the year 11 books. However, *Context* had one of the most explicit information given on pragmatics. This exercise first included information on how a person in the text always offends people she speaks with even if she uses the right vocabulary and grammar. The authors then continue with examples of how to use the language correctly: “RESPONDING TO REQUESTS. English speakers use ‘please’, ‘thank you’ and ‘thanks’ quite a lot. Examples: ‘Do you want a cup of tea?’ ‘Yes please/No thanks’” (p. 26) before having the students rewrite this person’s statements to make them sound less rude.

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3 The example from *Context* is not part of the results on the glossaries that can be seen in Table 4; instead it is a part of the quantitative findings presented in Tables 1-3.
4.5.3 A comparison of information on pragmatics in course books for year 7 and year 11

References to differences in language use were scarce in all the books, except for the year 7 book *Wings*. The way that the information about pragmatics was presented in the books was different for the two different years. Books for year 7 had dialogue exercises where the students learned how to express themselves in different situations, while one of the books for year 11 (*Context*) had a more explicit explanation of how to use the English language in specific situations.

4.6 Summary of results

As can be seen in Table 2, explicit mention of differences and similarities between Swedish and English were the most common kind of comparisons found in the books. Out of those, a clear comparison with mention of both languages was the most common way for the authors to point out the differences and similarities.

The majority of comparisons were found in the grammar sections of the books. Consequently, it was comparisons of grammatical structures in the languages that were the most common kind of comparisons found, while pronunciation and information on pragmatics were covered the least by the authors.

In general, the books from the two years had a similar way of informing the students of the differences and similarities between the languages. However, one conclusion that can be drawn is that comparisons of English and Swedish were more common in the books for year 7 than the books for year 11. This was true for all the four linguistic levels that were examined in this study. What can be seen from the results is also that *Output*, *Context* and *Worldwide English* seem to be the books with the least references to differences and similarities between English and Swedish. However, *Context* also seemed to be the book that had the most direct way of referring to transfer through their section on *false friends* and this book also pointed out explicitly how lack of knowledge of language use can lead to misinterpretations (see Section 4.5.2).
5. Discussion

What can be said about the importance of transfer and interference in English course books in Sweden is that it is an area that does not seem to be of great importance for the authors of the books. The words transfer and interference are never mentioned or explained to the students. Only subtle references to transfer are found where the authors appear to be trying to make the students aware of differences and similarities between Swedish and English. These references are not directly pointed out to the students; instead the authors have left it up to the students to use the information given to them on differences and similarities between the languages. It is also up to them to make the connection that this knowledge can be of help in their language acquisition.

Explicit and implicit comparison between Swedish and English can be found on all four linguistic levels (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, pragmatics); however, in the present study, explicit references were the most common. Only in comparisons of vocabulary, implicit references were more frequent than explicit comparison. That explicit comparison is found to be the most common can both be because that is a good way for the authors to explain how the English language works, but also because those kinds of comparisons are easier to find than implicit comparisons.

Whereas grammatical comparisons were covered the most, pronunciation and phonetics were least covered by the books. Especially with pronunciation and phonetics, it seemed to be up to the authors of each book to decide whether or not it was an area worth pointing out to the students. Because of this, there were greater differences between the course books that made up the data for the present study than when it comes to any of the other three linguistic levels.

Generally, though, the different course books examined in this study were fairly similar in how they dealt with comparisons between Swedish and English. Overall, comparisons between the languages seem to be covered a little more often in the books for year 7 than books for year 11. This can be seen especially with explicit comparison (see Table 1) where contrasts between the languages were more frequently mentioned in books for year 7 than books for year 11. The authors also seemed to favor explicit comparison between Swedish and English, something that
was true for both year 7 and year 11 books. A similarity could also be found in how the authors used the glossary lists (see Table 4). With a few exceptions, the findings regarding the glossary lists were nearly identical in the books for year 7 and the books for year 11.

Even though, as discussed above, the two different years handled comparisons between Swedish and English in similar ways there were still some differences. In general, in year 11 books all information was in English, compared to the year 7 books where two of them had grammar sections with explanations in Swedish (Wings and Happy). The use of Swedish instead of English in two of the year 7 books can be a way for the authors to be more easily understood by the students. In the year 11 books, concepts and expressions were explained through the use of equivalent expressions rather than a reference to what they mean in Swedish. This may be one of the reasons why this study found more references to comparison between Swedish and English in the books for year 7 than the books for year 11 (see Table 1).

However, another reason why there is less comparison in the books for year 11 can be that the books are for students on different proficiency levels. Odlin (1989:133-134) talks about the possible correlation between proficiency and transfer; how less proficient learners will rely more on transfer than more proficient learners will. She argues that the research done on this only includes negative transfer and that more proficient learners are instead more likely to rely on positive transfer. Even though this relation between L2 ability and transfer cannot be “proved”, it can also help explain why the year 11 book Pick & Mix include almost twice as many instances of comparison of Swedish and English than Worldwide English and Context combined. Worldwide English and Context are both books intended for the preparatory programs in upper secondary school, while Pick & Mix was written to be used in the vocational programs. Students that attend the preparatory programs are generally more proficient in English than students in the vocational programs.

As brought up in Section 2.3, research has shown that knowledge about how different languages function can be of benefit in language acquisition. But as with all learning, each individual learns in many different ways. Hence, the discussion can be raised whether or not the differences between languages are important to teach the
students. As part of this discussion, the issue of the number of students with a different mother tongue than Swedish in Swedish schools emerges. For them knowledge of several languages might be beneficial to their language acquisition due to the fact that many of them learn English and Swedish at the same time. Knowledge of how English and Swedish differ from each other might help them separate the languages from each other when learning them, knowledge less needed by Swedish students since they do not need to learn Swedish and English simultaneously.

However, one of the major issues with language transfer is the difficulty in identifying what is and is not transfer. In addition to the factors mentioned in Section 2.1, one also has to consider each individual’s unique use of language. Consequently, the criteria for what is considered transfer for one learner can be completely different for another. This issue of the unique use of language by each individual will also apply when looking at the implicit references to the differences and similarities between Swedish and English in the different course books. The difficulty with this is that the authors might have meant to point out differences and similarities but students might not interpret it as such. Different students can also interpret it in different ways, making the findings in this study questionable to others that interpret the language in the course books in a different way.

6. Conclusion

Even though transfer has proved a difficult concept to identify and predict, and direct reference to transfer or interference was not found in any of the books examined, this study has been able to pinpoint areas of the books where the authors have informed the students of differences and similarities between Swedish and English. These references might be able to get the students to think about how one thing works in the other language and themselves see how this knowledge can be of use in their language acquisition. Of the different linguistic levels of comparison (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, pragmatics) grammar was the most common, followed by vocabulary, pragmatics and pronunciation where grammar, vocabulary and pragmatics were handled in similar ways in all the books examined. Pronunciation was the linguistic level of comparison that was refereed to the least and it was also here that the greatest differences between the books were seen. Overall, the books for year 7 included more references to the differences and similarities between the
languages than the books for year 11. There can be various reasons for this, e.g. that a lower proficiency level means a higher probability of incorporating information on differences in course books.

In conclusion, since the curricula of the English subject do not explicitly state how transfer should be dealt with in the English classroom, the authors of the different course books used for English learning in Swedish schools have had to decide how to deal with the subject of transfer themselves. The fact that the curricula point to the importance of having the students learn about other languages and how that knowledge can help in language acquisition can be seen in the results of this study, where references to differences and similarities between Swedish and English were found in all the books examined in this study.

As a suggestion for further studies within this subject, focus could be laid on the change in course books over time, for instance, with a study comparing Swedish course books in English from the 1970s or 1980s with more recent books. Another concept that can be an area of further study due to the greater number of students in our language classrooms today that have widely different language backgrounds is translanguaging, a concept which means to make use of a speaker’s full linguistic ability without regard for social, political or national and state defined boundaries (Otheguy, García & Reid, 2015).

References

Primary sources


**Secondary sources**


