

TV, music and the Internet

Outside and inside the classroom at a lower secondary school

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1. Introduction

The word 'pedagogue' derives from the Greek 'paidagogos' (of *pais* "child" and *agogos* "leader"). In the ancient world this was the word for the slave who followed children to and from school. Today, more than 2000 years later the word is not far from its original meaning. The pedagogue should lead students to knowledge and remove obstacles that prohibited learning, instead of just teaching (Normell 2002). Teachers of today have a different situation than what they had fifty years ago. Nowadays English can be heard on both TV, in music and on the Internet, which gives teachers various options on how to reach students. By taking these resources into their teaching, teachers lead students to further possibilities to learn English.

In the society of today young people are exposed to media technology everywhere. It is apparent that children as well as adolescents and adults are affected by television, music, the Internet in one way or the other. The input that students get outside of the school is sometimes referred to as extramural input. This term describes all English input in one phrase. When it is used in this paper it constitutes input from TV, music and the Internet, because those are the main media resources that this paper focuses on.

Tetzchner (2005) and Werner (1996), along with many other psychologists claim that TV is the medium that has the most influence on both young and grown-up people. Most of the adolescents in the twenty-first century have grown up with at least one TV set in their homes. Many hours of young people's spare time are occupied by TV, films, music, the Internet etc., and in this modern society this is an important source of impact (Tetzchner 2005).

Teachers should take advantage of this interest young people seem to have for TV, music and the Internet, because doing things that students are interested in may motivate these young people to learn. It is important for English teachers to be aware that today pupils meet many forms of English outside school (Syllabus for English). It is stated in the syllabus for English that teachers should make use of the varied forms of English that students encounter outside school. The first hypothesis of this essay is that TV, music and the Internet are important in learning English as a second language. Varied teaching is a key to individualization. By using various kinds of teaching methods the teacher may be able to meet the students where they are, at their 'level' and also to keep them motivated. In the Swedish curriculum Lpo 94 it is stated that:

The school should strive to be a living social community that provides security and generates a will and a desire to learn. Since it works in an environment with

many sources of knowledge, the school should endeavour to try to create the best conditions for the pupils' development, thinking and learning (Lpo 94:7).

The second hypothesis is that the teacher is no longer the first knowledge intermediary in the society of today. Teachers and classrooms do not have the monopoly for knowledge where students can learn English. What does this new role of the teacher imply? Teachers should be aware that school education is not the only way that pupils can learn English. The situation of teachers has changed. Their teaching has to be as interesting as the exciting TV programs (Werner, 1996). Consequently, TV, music and the Internet in the classroom can definitely be used to help keeping or getting pupils' attention and motivation.

During my teacher's training period I realized that music and the Internet are also things that keep many pupils motivated. They walk around both outside and inside the classrooms with their mp3 players, although they are not allowed to bring mp3 players into the classroom. Music seems to be very important for many young people; they listen to a lot of English songs and probably they know the lyrics of their favorite songs very well. Do pupils learn English by listening to English music? And do they gain some knowledge of the English language by surfing the Internet? Are pupils even aware that they can or do learn English from TV, music and the Internet?

1.1 Aim and research questions

The purpose of this paper is (i) to investigate, by means of a quantitative questionnaire, how three classes at a lower secondary school believe they are affected by non-formal English learning, (ii) and how three English teachers use the media in their classrooms. The latter part of the study was carried out through qualitative interviews with the teachers in question. One can hear as well as see the English language on television, in music, on the Internet and so on; therefore it is important that teachers are aware how different knowledge sources affect pupils in their language learning. More specific research questions are:

- In what ways do students think TV, music and the Internet, i.e. extramural input, affect their English language learning outside the classroom?
- What do teachers think about using TV, music and the Internet in their classrooms and in what ways do they use these kinds of media resources? How do teachers make use of pupils' interests and their language experience, when it comes to TV, music and the Internet?

1.2 Scope

There is much to write about and investigate when it comes to this subject, therefore this essay is narrowed down to what the author of this essay believe is connected to her future teaching profession. This essay will concentrate upon how pupils' learning is affected by English lyrics, English TV programs and the Internet. There were in-depth interviews with three English teachers at a lower secondary school, to see how they integrate the media in their teaching and what they think about using it in the classroom. Questionnaires were handed out to three classes, to investigate if the pupils believe that they learn something by watching TV, listening to music and 'surfing' the Internet.

2. Theoretical background

The theoretical background presents what is expected from the students by the end of year nine according to the Swedish syllabus for English and the Swedish curriculum for the compulsory school, Lpo 94. This section also brings forward previous research about extramural input. However, one of the studies presented concentrates upon CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) classrooms, i.e. working with a subject matter through the medium of English. Some research about the influence of the media on young people from the Education Administration (Skolverket) is presented as well.

2.1 Curriculum Lpo 94 and the syllabus for English

In the "curriculum for the compulsory school system, the pre-school class and the leisure-time centre Lpo 94" (Lpo 94) it is stated that the school should aim at making the students understand that they learn in different ways, that is, even outside school. Moreover, teachers should make use of the fact that pupils learn outside school and care for their students' interests.

The English language and other forms of culture from English-speaking countries are widely accessible in Swedish society. Pupils encounter today many variants of English outside school. They meet English in a variety of contexts: on TV, in films, in the world of music, via the Internet and computer games, in texts and via contacts with English-speaking people. [...] The subject covers both examining the meaning conveyed by language and making use of the richness

and variety of English, which children and young people meet outside the school.
(Syllabus for English)

By the end of year nine, “the school in its teaching of English should aim to ensure that pupils“

- develop their ability to use aids and critically examine sources of information, [...]
- [...] develop their ability to reflect on and take responsibility for their own language learning and consciously use different ways of working to support their own learning. (Syllabus for English)

2.2 Previous studies

Extramural input, i.e. the language students learn outside the school, ‘non-formal language’, is a rather new concept; therefore it is hard to find previous research. However, Pia Sundqvist (2007) has done an oral presentation about this very subject, extramural input. Her presentation concentrated upon investigating to what extent extramural input has an effect on the voice stream of pupils and what kind of vocabulary they use when they are speaking English in the classroom (Sundqvist 2007). While Sundqvist focuses on examining the pupils’ language with regard to voice stream and vocabulary (Sundqvist 2007), this paper investigates pupils’ awareness of their English language learning as a second language when it comes to their exposure to TV, music and the Internet as well as how teachers handle TV, music and the Internet in their classrooms.

The aim of Sylvén’s (2006) paper is to get the answer to the question; “How is extramural exposure to English among Swedish school students used in the CLIL classroom?” (Sylvén 2006:47). This is a highly up to date topic since the situation of young people today diverges in various ways from former generations. The development of society has offered possibilities that were not to be found during previous years. At the same time students meet obstacles which have not existed in the same proportions as nowadays. Opportunities of communication have exploded. Computers and cell phones make it possible to communicate with anyone at any distance (Oscarson & Apelgren 2005).

Sylvén concentrates upon CLIL, Content and Language Integrated Learning, and she also looked upon English reading habits of Swedish pupils, what various types of contact they have with English, differences between CLIL students and traditional students when it comes

to exposure to the English language and gender differences. Lexical proficiency is the main skill her paper focuses on. "The aim is to be able to distinguish the effects of various types of exposure on the learning of vocabulary" (Sylvén 2006:48). Sylvén also relates the results to a self-assessment protocol and to the kind of material that teachers use in the CLIL classroom.

To find out how much students are exposed to English in their leisure time and what form of contact they have with English in school, they made language diaries. From the results of these diaries Sylvén discovered that there was a strong connection between how much the students were exposed to English and their level of self-assessment. However, no conclusions could be drawn as to whether the amount of exposure and the actual performance correlate. Should this turn out to be the actual fact though, it would probably be "important information for everybody involved in teaching English as a second language to have" (Sylvén 2006:52). Teachers could use this knowledge to give students confidence to participate in various types of English outside of school. School should inform students that extracurricular exposure can improve their skills in English. It is not amusing to read a book, listen to a song or watch a film on our own and then analyse what we read, heard or saw (Glasser 1996). Doing this alone can definitely be hard, therefore teachers need to bring music and films into their classrooms.

Sylvén puts "the relationship between motivation and the type of teaching material used in the CLIL classroom" (Sylvén 2007:53) in the centre of attention. Sylvén claims that the American TV-show that most of Swedish students watch is *The Simpsons*. Students watch TV programs and films, read books, surf the Internet, listen to music of their own choice. They choose to do these things because they are in one way or another relevant to the individual student.

Sylvén also states that,

Bearing in mind the supposed positive effect of the use of material relevant to the students in teaching, it is surprising to note that the amount of authentic material used in the classroom is very limited. [...] It is thus hoped that in the future teachers, and in particular CLIL teachers, will have the motivation and possibility to use authentic texts to a much larger extent than what presently seems to be the case in their teaching. Why not start with *The Simpsons*? (Sylvén 2007:54ff)

By introducing e.g. *The Simpsons*, which probably most students know about, into the classroom teachers let their students make their knowledge visible. Since many students are

familiar with the show, they can make use of their informal knowledge in the classroom. Sometimes students consider that they have too low grades when they compare their grades to what they believe they comprehend in 'reality'. Some students converse with English speaking people very well outside the school, and then they do not understand why they get low grades. For that reason, it is of importance that students' experiences and ideas about the English language outside as well as inside of the school obtain attention in the classroom dialogue (Oscarson & Apelgren 2005b). This will also motivate students' learning.

2.3 The Education Administration about the media

Since the 1950's medial resources have accelerated at an apparent pace. The access to several TV channels, to the Internet and to cell phones has increased and is available to almost every student. Students think that English is important, useful and one of the most interesting subjects in school, although many students believe that English is hard. English is one of the school subjects where learning outside of school is most substantial (Oscarson & Apelgren 2005a). It is not surprising, in view of the fact that, research shows that the consumption of mass media is one of the major activities that take up much of the students' spare time.

Questions regarding differentiation and individualisation have had a great part of the research, on the subject of education policy from a school historical point of view. The school of today does not only have to adjust its contents and methods to students' abilities, gender and age, but also adapt to students' interests, personalities, learning styles etc (Oscarson & Apelgren 2005b). It is not reasonable that teachers should see to every student's interest all the time, but using resources like e.g. films, music or the Internet can help students to see the connection between school and 'reality'.

Today young people, in Sweden, do not think of English as a foreign language, but rather as a natural phenomenon in the culture they live in (Oscarson & Apelgren 2005b). That could be the result of English being such an important part in school as well as be able to talk and write in English is a good quality when it comes to certain areas of communication, e.g. chatting or playing computer games online. Oscarson and Apelgren (2005b) note that it is becoming more and more common that one omit the translation, e.g. in commercials, in some types and parts of TV programs and in some forms of sports and entertainment contexts. The practical application of the English language has great relevance to the students' everyday life (Oscarson & Apelgren 2005b), just like it is stated in the syllabus for English (see above).

3. Material and method

This section describes the methods that were used and the difficulties attaining appropriate material.

3.1 Finding material

To begin with, I thought about what young people mostly acquire their English language input from and thereby I made the decision that this paper would put focus on TV, music and the Internet. Most of the material I found was about how the media influence young people's ways of living from their exposure to different media. It is hard to obtain information about whether English media has an effect on pupils' English learning as a second language.

3.2 Questionnaires and interviews

The investigations were done at a lower secondary school in Växjö, with nine graders and their English teachers. Three in-depth interviews were done, which makes it difficult to draw any general conclusions. However, it was still enough to perceive an insight on teachers' different opinions about using TV, music and the Internet in their teaching. Every interview was carried out in Swedish, to prevent misunderstandings, if any, and to make it easier to ask additional questions if needed. The interviews were about fifteen to thirty minutes long and every 'dialogue' was nice and relaxed. Whenever a question needed to be explained more explicitly it could easily be done, which would have been intricate, if the teachers only had a questionnaire to fill out.

It can be a good idea to use a questionnaire, rather than interviews, if one wants to get to know more students attitudes to and experiences of something (Estling Vannestål 2008). Therefore, questionnaires were handed out to three ninth grade classes (56 students) at the same school. The questionnaire was in Swedish, since there were some open questions, i.e. one is allowed to write spontaneous responses, and it is generally easier to express oneself in one's mother tongue. However, keep in mind that the questionnaires ask for what the students themselves think about their English language learning and perhaps the results do not correspond to the actual 'truth', since it is hard to be objective when it comes to describing their own learning. Although, it is stated in the syllabus that already by the end of the fifth

year in school pupils should have reached some important goals like, for example:

- be able to reflect on their own learning of e.g. words and phrases
(Syllabus for English)

By the end of year nine in school students should, for example:

- be able to reflect on and draw conclusions about their way of
learning English (Syllabus for English)

Therefore, students should be able to answer the questionnaires, and that is why I chose students in the ninth grade so that they have reached a certain maturity to have reflections on their own ways of learning a second language.

To find out how teachers use TV, music and the Internet in their classrooms I interviewed three teachers about their views and how they use these materials in their teaching. According to Sylvén's (2007) research it is common that authentic material is very restricted in the classroom, even though there are theories that the use of material relevant to the students in teaching has a positive impact on their learning.

3.3 Procedure

Before I handed out the questionnaires to each class I did a short presentation of myself and my paper. There was a short explanation at the top of the questionnaire, nevertheless, I explained why I was there and what the questionnaire looked like, to make the students more prepared. They were also informed that they were totally anonymous in this investigation.

The three in-depth interviews were also conducted at the same lower secondary school. The teachers whom I interviewed are anonymous in this paper as well, since I wanted to get as truthful answers and opinions as possible. A speech dictation device was used to record all interviews. Thereafter, everything was transcribed and translated into English, in view of the fact that the questionnaire and all interviews were done in Swedish. The translation of the material may have had an impact on the results of this study since I was the one who translated everyone's answers.

3.4 Ethical considerations

I started every questionnaire and interview situation by pointing out that everything that is written on the questionnaires and said in the interviews cannot be connected to the individual or to the school. This was done for the reason that I wanted honest answers and so the students as well as the teachers would feel more secure to speak their minds.

I did not have to get consent of the students' parents, since according to the ethical rules (Vetenskapsrådet) it is not necessary to get parents' agreement since the students are fifteen years old when they are in ninth grade.

3.5 Validity and reliability

One thing that needs to be taken into consideration is the result from the first questionnaire question i.e. 'How do you think you learn English **best**? (here you can put more than one cross if you feel that there is more than one alternative that suits you)' [my emphasis]. It has come to my knowledge that this question can be perceived as ambiguous. The word *best* can be interpreted as how the students think they learn English quantitatively or qualitatively best, i.e. the amount of English or grammatical correct English. I asked some teachers at the lower secondary school about their first impressions of the question and they all thought that the students would not misunderstand what I was looking for namely, quantitative English, i.e. where they learn most of their English. But, one cannot disregard the fact that there is a risk that different interpretations have been made among the students regarding this particular question.

4. Results and analysis

The first part of this section presents the results and the analysis of the answers to the questionnaires, while the second part is about the interviews that were made with the students' English teachers.

4.1 Questionnaires

There were fifty-six ninth grade students who participated in this investigation, and the survey is presented below, starting with the first question:

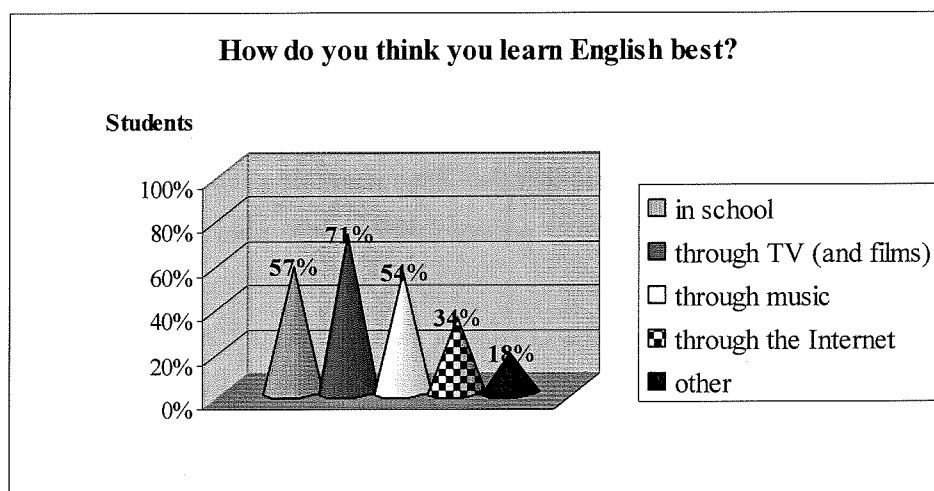


Figure 1. How do you think you learn English best?

The reason why the answers are over 100 % all together is because the students where allowed to put more than one cross when they answered this question. According to Figure 1 these students learn most English by watching TV and films (71%). Although, not far behind comes school (57%) and music (54%). 34% of the students thought that they learn much English through the Internet. Students who answered that they learn from 'other situations' wrote that they have friends who cannot speak Swedish and then they learn English by talking to each other. Some have learnt English by travelling. One student noted that he/she has had an exchange student from America, through the football club, living at his/her house.

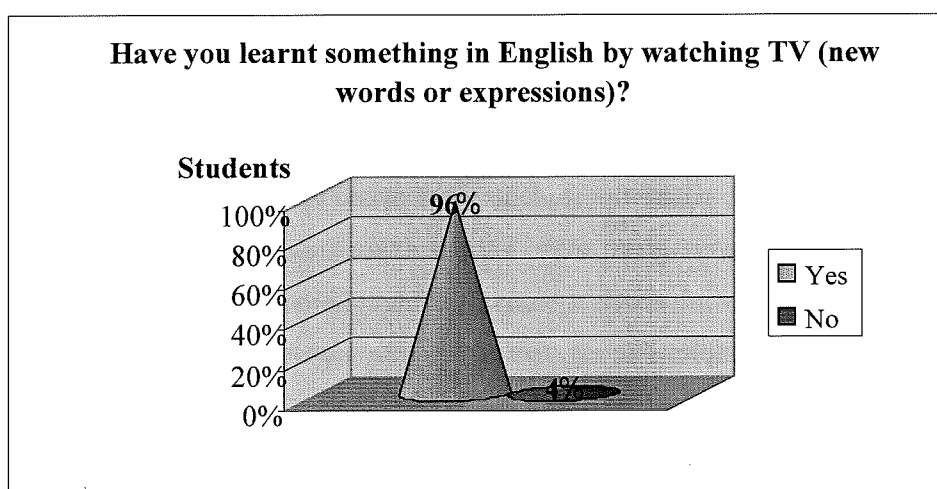


Figure 2. Have you learnt something in English by watching TV?

Figure 2 shows that 96 % of the fifty-six students feel that they have learnt something in English by watching TV and 4% do not think they have learnt anything. The follow-up question was if they could come up with any examples of what they have learnt. The results are as follows, most of the students commented that they have learnt new words, expressions, everyday terms, slang words, different accents, pronunciations, new phrases, word order, synonyms, and abbreviations. Some of the students wrote more substantial examples, e.g. *you are expected*, *oh crap*, *homie (i.e. friend)* and *it is raining cats and dogs (i.e. pouring rain)*. Some of the students learnt a lot by hearing the English word and read the Swedish subtitles, when watching TV or films.

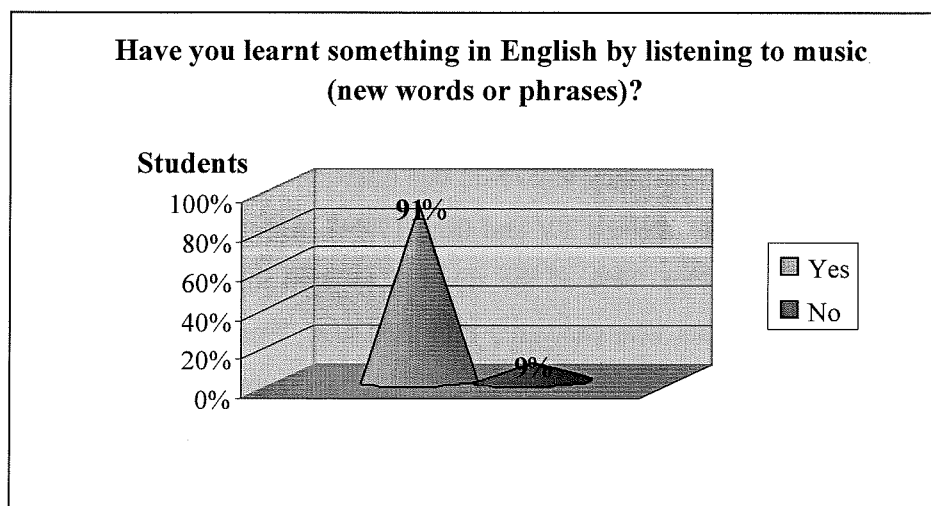


Figure 3. Have you learnt something in English by listening to music?

Figure 3 illustrates that 91% of the students concerned think they have learnt something in English by listening to music and 9% believe they have not. This question was tagged along with a follow-up question as well, where the students were asked to give examples of what they have learnt. Comments that were given were: various expressions, new words, phrases, slang words, different accents, word order, synonyms, abbreviations and pronunciations. Some students added specific examples like e.g. *run*, *decapitate*, *naive*, *remember*, *what does not kill you, it can make you stronger*.

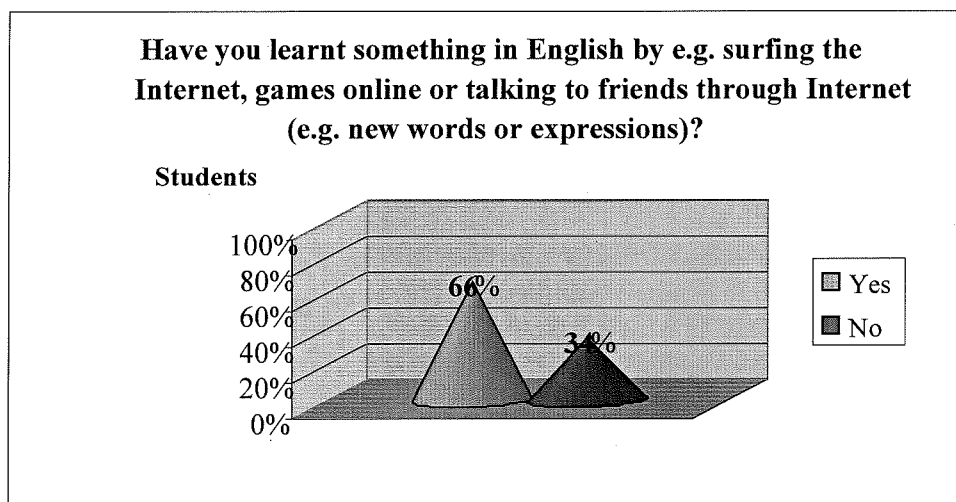


Figure 4. Have you learnt something in English by e.g. surfing the Internet, games online or talking to friends through the Internet?

Figure 4 demonstrates that 66% of the students have learnt something in English through the Internet and 34% of them have not. The students were asked to give examples and their responses to what they have learnt were: abbreviations, words that have to do with wars and space, grammar, various words and expressions. *Noob*¹ and *skills*² were a couple of words mentioned, by two students, that were learnt through the Internet. Some of the students have also noted that they have several 'Internet friends' from foreign countries with whom they have to speak English. Those students who play games online often 'add' people from other parts of the world. Moreover, in English strategy games they have to know English to understand the story. One student mentioned that when he/she searches for facts to exercises in the subject, English, he/she learns unfamiliar words.

¹ *Noob* is a slang word for a beginner. A synonym for *noob* is *rookie*.

² The word *Skills* is synonymous with talents, abilities and proficiencies.

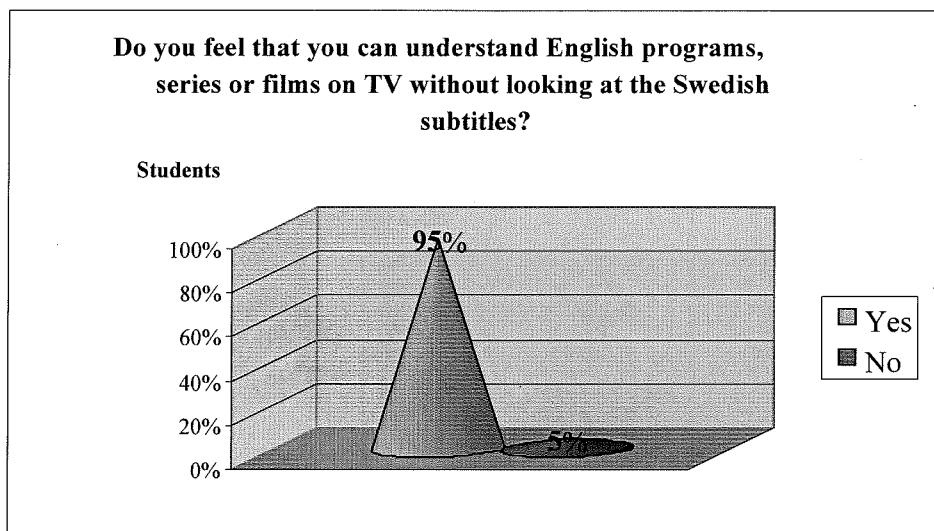


Figure 5. Do you feel that you can understand English TV programs, series or films on TV without looking at the Swedish subtitles?

According to Figure 5, 95 % of the students feel that they can understand the contents of English programs, series and films on TV without looking at the Swedish subtitles. 5 % of them answered that they do not understand what is said without Swedish subtitles. This shows that the majority of the students assess themselves highly, they seem to think that they understand English quite well. There was no follow-up question to this question, nevertheless, some students added comments and they seemed to prefer Swedish subtitles when watching TV or films.

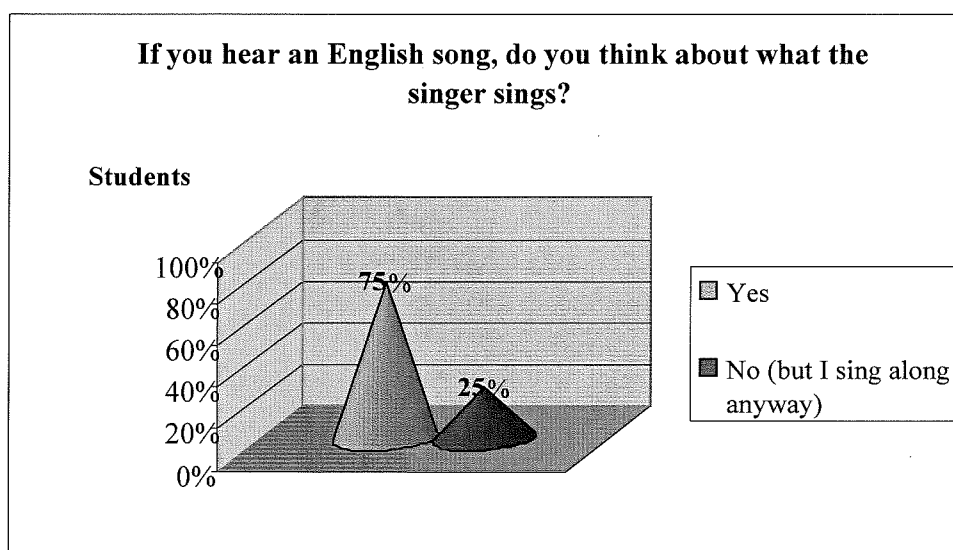


Figure 6. If you hear an English song, do you think about what the singer sings?

Figure 6 shows that 75% of the students think about what the singer sings when they hear a song in English and 25% do not reflect on the lyrics.

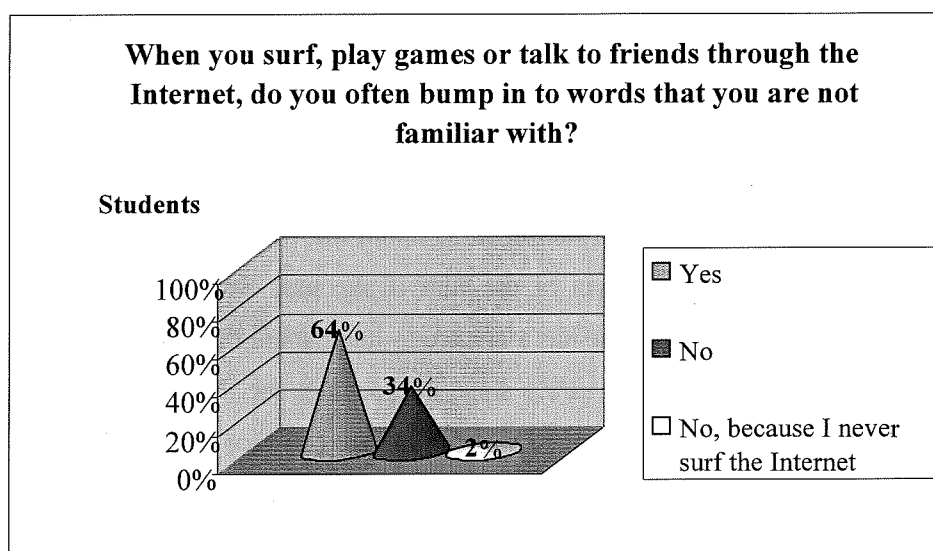


Figure 7. When you surf, play games or talk to friends through the Internet, do you often bump into words that you are not familiar with?

Figure 7 illustrates that 64% of the students often bump into words that are new to them. There were 34% who do not habitually bump into unfamiliar words and there were only 2% of those who answered that they were never out on the Internet. Figure 7 has almost the same results as Figure 4, which concerned whether the students have learnt something through the Internet. There could be a connection between those Figures, that those who have learnt something through the Internet often bump into words that are new to them.

The high numbers in all of the figures indicate that the students being concerned think highly of themselves when it comes to self-assessment. They believe they learn English outside the classroom and their responses give the impression that they are interested in watching TV and films, listening to music and doing different activities on the Internet that are in English. Therefore, it is important to bring these resources into the classroom, so that teachers can connect 'classroom English' to the English outside school, which is especially important for the under-achieving language learners who often have difficulties relating English to something else than a school subject (Estling Vannestål 2007) This will further be discussed in the next sections.

4.2 Interviews

This section presents the summaries of the interviews made with the three teachers as well as the analyses of the interviews.

4.2.1 Interviews with teachers

Teacher A uses films quite often in her teaching. Sometimes she lets her students discuss the film or write a review. At the moment she works with a working area that is called *countries* in one of her classes. She has borrowed information films about the USA, Great Britain and Australia. It depends upon the language level of the film if she uses Swedish or English subtitles, because it is important that everyone has a chance to understand the film. In teacher B's classroom TV and films are used rather rarely since he does not see the need for using those resources, however in teacher C's teaching, TV and films are commonly used as natural aids. Teacher C suggested that, as a teacher one can present many variants of exercises like for example, the teacher divides the class into pairs. One student has his or her back against the TV and the other student watches the TV and tells his or her friend what is going on, and the sound is off. Then the whole class can watch that episode and then change places. If a student has reading and writing disabilities it can be really hard to read a book and perhaps the student can assimilate the language better by listening to films and music.

At some points, when teacher A works with English music in her classroom, she lets each and every student bring a song with lyrics to class and then they work with it in different ways like, for example, translate it, summarize it, listening comprehensions, discuss the theme and message (teacher A). When "informal knowledge meets formal knowledge, it often enhances 'the will to know' (Oscarson & Apelgren 2005b:84)". At the moment, teacher A's ninth grade students work on a music project. They are supposed to write their own English lyrics and music. Thereafter, they will perform as well as record their songs in a studio. This shows that students can work in many different ways with music. They can work with tasks that can be done in five minutes, e.g. make a gap-filling comprehension of songs that students bring or they can do an exercise that takes up to a couple of months and unites two subjects, like they do in their 'music project'. Teacher B does not use English music frequently, not more than what is in the textbooks. Nevertheless, if they read about something special, like e.g. Martin Luther King they let the music of U2's *Pride* fill the classroom. Teacher C uses music as a teaching tool quite often. She sometimes lets her students listen to film music, and they should try to imagine and write what they think is going on.

Using the Internet in a classroom situation is not easy, since the condition of computers is not the best, states Teacher A. Students get to search for information on the Internet, but she has to help them frequently e.g. to give them web-sites where they can find useful information. They have interactive boards in some classrooms where teachers have access to the Internet, although the boards are not used that much in teacher A's teaching. Teacher C is of the same opinion that is, the Internet is rarely used. Teacher C states that it is because of poor availability that it practically is impossible to work with the Internet.

The interactive boards³ are definitely an enhancement, according to teacher B. The teacher does not have to move around the equipment and everyone can hear as well as see what is shown. At times, when he in fact uses the Internet is when he searches for clips on www.youtube.com, with the whole class, but he never lets them work with the Internet at an individual level, since he does not see the need for it. However, the Internet is a natural item in students' weekdays, outside of the school that is. When teachers use the Internet as a student-centred working tool it often leads to an enhancement of students' motivation (Estling Vannestål 2007).

Teacher A states that it is important to use these forms of media, because they stimulate all senses, especially for those students who learn visually and auditory. In other words, instead of reading about it one takes in the information by using all ones senses. That is good, since everyone learns in different ways. She also adds that pronunciation one can get for free through music, but she does not believe that students in a specific moment think that "well, there I learned something!". Teacher B believes that students listen to a lot of music and watch quite a lot of TV, but they do not comprehend their learning. He does not think that the students of that age are conscious about what they hear, what they listen to, what the language sounds and what word order there is regarding their own learning. However, as the results show from the figures above some students are in fact aware that they learn both various accents and word order by watching TV, films, listening to music and surfing the Internet. Teacher C suggests that teachers can use films as a way of learning e.g. instead of reading a book, students read on the screen and there are pictures as well. Teachers and students can do tremendously many things, using these forms of media. However, it is hard to change the students' attitudes towards films because, their stance is 'wow, we are going to watch a film', and that means relaxing from their point of view. Teacher C ends the interview by saying that

³ An interactive board, a.k.a. *clever board* or *smart board*, works like an ordinary whiteboard connected to a computer. That means that teachers have access to the Internet and whatever they write on the board they can print so that every student can get a copy of what has been brought up during class.

she believes that many students learn a lot of English when working at home with the Internet. The teaching in school needs to complement those things. There are certain things that students do not learn, and the school has to adjust its teaching to 'the real world' that is to say outside school. Undoubtedly, students learn English by watching films, listening to music and surfing the Internet, and naturally they should continue to do so.

The examples the teachers provide show that they actually work with different forms of media more or less. Every teacher should teach and show their students that learning English is not just something that they can do in school, but also outside of school by doing different activities. This correlate with a statement from Lpo 94 namely,

The school has the task of imparting fundamental values and promoting pupils' learning in order to prepare them to live and work in society. It should therefore impart the more unvarying forms of knowledge that constitute the common frame of reference that all in society need. Pupils should be able to keep their bearings in a complex reality where there is a vast flow of information and where the rate of change is rapid. This is why methods of acquiring and using new knowledge and skills are important.
(Lpo 94:5)

Since students encounter authentic English language texts outside school when they e.g. watch TV, listen to music and surf the Internet they should, hence, be motivated to do so also within the school context.

5. Summary and discussion

Extramural input definitely has an impact on young people, but to what extent is still to be found out. The aim of this essay was to investigate if students think that TV, music and the Internet affect their English language learning outside the classroom. Furthermore, the purpose was also to see in what ways their teachers use these kinds of media recourses.

Questionnaires were handed out to three ninth grade classes (56 students) and interviews were made with their English teachers. The investigations showed that the majority of the students thought that they learned a lot outside of the school, mostly from TV and films. They claimed that they learned things like words, phrases and pronunciations etc.

Two of the three teachers who were interviewed used TV and music a lot in their teaching because they thought it was of importance to their students' different learning styles,

while the third teacher rarely used any of the resources mentioned above. Even though their methods differed they were of the same opinion that TV, music and the Internet have a huge effect on their students' English language learning.

My previous notions proved to correlate quite well to the results. Almost all students wrote that they at least at some point had learnt new words, expressions and pronunciations by watching TV, listening to music and surfing the Internet, which shows that these forms of media are to some extent important to their English language learning. This is understandable, since according to the syllabus for English, the English language is commonly accessible in the society of Sweden. The reason why students seem to learn a lot of English outside the classroom can possibly be the result of the easy access to the English language. Sylvén (2006) discovered that there is a strong connection between how much the students are exposed to English and their level of self-assessment. However, no conclusions could be drawn on the basis of her or my investigations as to whether the amount of exposure and the actual performance correlate. Figure 1 (see under result section) corresponds to the second hypothesis, which was stated in the introduction, i.e. that school is not the primary intermediary of knowledge any longer. According to Figure 1, students think that most of their knowledge comes from TV and films, although school and music are not far behind when it comes to where they learn English best.

As the results from the figures show, most of the students think they learn words, phrases, expressions, pronunciations, grammar, word order, different accents, abbreviations, synonyms, slang words, everyday terms by watching TV, listening to music and doing different activities on the Internet. It would be really interesting to take the investigation a bit further and compare these results to their grades. The conclusion can be drawn that most of the students watch TV, listen to music and do things on the Internet which means that they are very much exposed to the English language and they seem to be interested in doing those things as well. Therefore, teachers should bring these resources into the classroom, so that students can connect 'classroom English' to the English outside school.

The three teachers who were interviewed all had different opinions about using TV, music and the Internet in their respective classroom. While, teacher A and C were openly interested in 'experimenting' with the different resources and develop themselves within those areas, teacher B seemed to be more comfortable using foremost text books.

Teacher A lets her students watch information films as well as films just for amusement. The students usually get to discuss or write a summary of the film. When they work with music the students get to choose lyrics that they like. The tasks could be e.g. to analyze and

translate the texts. When working with the Internet, it is mostly to search for information to various exercises. Teacher B rarely uses TV, music or the Internet, although, the Internet is used when he shows clips from www.youtube.com to his students from time to time. Teacher C lets her students do various tasks when they watch films. She also uses music in her teaching in different ways. Sometimes she combines TV and music e.g. her students get to listen to film music and then they get to analyze the melody and write a story about it. The Internet is hardly ever used in teacher C's classroom. Perhaps one of the reasons why some teachers tend to use TV, music and the Internet less than other teachers may have to do with what Oscarson and Apelgren (2005b) stated, that the school of today does not only have to adjust its contents and methods to students' abilities, gender and age, but also adapt to students' interests, personalities, learning styles etc.

There cannot be any general conclusions drawn, although all of the teachers were of the opinion that TV; music and the Internet have a great impact on the students. Teacher A and C seemed to be very aware of students' different learning styles. They tried to see to their students' interests and what they experience outside of the classrooms, while teacher B believed that students already do those things at home and therefore they mostly work with other resources in his classroom. I think that students learn best if they have varied teaching. Then every student gets the chance to see in what way he/she learns best. Since students watch TV, films, listen to music and surf the Internet, teachers should educate them on how to take advantage of those resources in their English language learning.

5.1 Media exercises

Here follow some suggestions on how media exercises can be used in the classroom:

- Instead of working with a text from the school book, students can choose lyrics that they like and do a vocabulary list and read the song texts as if they were poems, since most lyrics are comparable to poems.
- Students get to choose a song that they like and write their own lyrics to the melody.
- *News of the week*. The teacher divides the class into groups of preferably two to four students. Once a week the teacher starts off the lesson by letting one group tell the rest of the class current news. To get hold of news, students can surf the Internet or watch TV to find some interesting news to present to their fellow students. Some sites where students can find good material are:

- www.news.bbc.co.uk (Great Britain)

- www.timeforkids.com (USA)
 - www.cnn.com (USA)
 - www.news.com.au (Australia)
 - www.irishnews.com (Ireland)
 - www.news24.com (South Africa)
 - www.canada.com (Canada)
- www.britkid.org and www.swedkid.nu are websites about identity, ethnicity and life which teachers can use in their teaching.
 - Teachers can find good lesson plans, quizzes, games, exercises etc. on the website www.englishclub.com.

As a future project I would like to evaluate the impact of these and other exercises on student performance. Another project for the future could be to see if students' self-assessment, about extramural input, corresponds to their actual performance.

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Appendix 1

Enkät (till elever)

Jag studerar till lärare och håller på att göra mitt examensarbete. Jag är tacksam om du vill hjälpa mig genom att fylla i denna enkät. Sätt ett kryss där du tycker att du passar bäst in i frågorna. Du som svarar på enkäten är helt anonym.

1. Hur tycker du att lär du dig bäst engelska? (här kan du sätta flera kryss om du känner att flera alternativ passar in.)
- i Skolan ☐ genom TV (och film) ☐ genom Musik ☐ genom Internet ☐
- Annat ☐

Om du kryssade i alternativet *Annat* kan du skriva här hur du lär dig bäst.

2. Har du lärt dig något på engelska genom att titta på TV (t.ex. nya ord eller uttryck)?
- Ja ☐ Nej ☐

Om du kryssade i Ja, försök ge exempel på vad du lärde dig.

3. Har du lärt dig något på engelska genom att lyssna på musik (t.ex. nya ord eller fraser)?
- Ja ☐ Nej ☐

Om du svarade Ja, försök ge exempel på vad du har lärt dig.

4. Har du lärt dig något på engelska genom att t.ex. surfa, spela spel eller prata med vänner över Internet (t.ex. nya ord eller nya uttryck)?

Ja [] Nej []

Om du svarade Ja, försök ge exempel på vad du har lärt dig.

5. Känner du att du kan förstå ett engelskt program, serie eller film på TV utan att titta på den svenska undertexten?

Ja [] Nej []

6. Om du hör en engelsk låttext, brukar du då tänka på vad artisten sjunger?

Ja [] Nej (men jag sjunger gärna med ändå) []

7. När du surfar, spelar spel eller pratar med vänner över Internet brukar du stöta på engelska ord som du inte känner igen?

Ja [] Nej [] Nej, för jag är aldrig ute på Internet []

Tack för din medverkan!

In English

Questionnaire (to the students)

I study to become a teacher and I am doing my degree project. I am grateful if you would help me by filling out this questionnaire. Mark the alternatives where you feel that you fit in best. You are totally anonymous.

1. How do you think you learn English best? (here you can put more than one mark if you feel that more than one alternative fits in.)

in school ☐ through TV (and films) ☐ through music ☐
through the Internet ☐ other ☐

If you marked the alternative *other* you can comment here on how you learn best.

2. Have you learnt something in English by watching TV (e.g. new words or expressions)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If you answered *Yes*, try to give examples on what you learned.

3. Have you learnt something in English by listening to music? (e.g. new words or phrases)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If you answered *Yes*, try to give examples on what you learned.

4. Have you learnt something in English by e.g. surfing the Internet, games online or talking to friends through the Internet? (e.g. new words or expressions)?

Yes [] No []

If you answered *Yes*, try to give examples on what you learned.

5. Do you feel that you can understand English TV programs, series or films on TV without looking at the Swedish subtitles?

Yes [] No []

6. If you hear an English song, do you think about what the singer sings?

Yes [] No (but I sing along anyway) []

7. When you surf, play games or talk to friends through the Internet, do you often bump into words that you are not familiar with?

Yes [] No [] No, because I never surf the Internet []

Thanks for your assistance!

Appendix 2

Intervju (med lärare)

1. Hur ofta använder du dig av TV och filmer i undervisningen?

-motivera

2. Hur ofta använder du dig av engelsk musik i klassrummet?

-motivera

3. Hur ofta använder du dig av Internet i din engelskundervisning?

-motivera

4. Vad tycker du om att använda TV, musik och Internet?

-motivera

5. Tycker du att det är viktigt att använda TV, musik och Internet?

-motivera

6. Vilken sorts media skulle du säga är den viktigaste att använda sig av i klassrummet? TV, musik, Internet eller ett annat alternativ?

-motivera

7. Tror du att eleverna lär sig mycket engelska genom TV, musik och Internet?

- Har eleverna ett intresse för TV, musik och Internet?

8. Hur tar du tillvara på elevernas kunskaper och intresse för TV, musik och Internet i klassrummet?

9. Skulle du vilja använda dig mer av TV, musik eller Internet i din undervisning?

10. Något du vill tillägga?

In English

Interview (with teachers)

1. How often do you use TV and films in your teaching?
- motivate
2. How often do you use English music in your classroom?
- motivate
3. How often do you use the Internet when you teach English?
-motivate
4. What do you think about using TV, music and the Internet?
-motivate
5. Do you think it is important to use TV, music and the Internet?
-motivate
6. What form of media would you say is the most important resource in the classroom? TV,
Music, the Internet or another option?
-motivate
7. Do you believe that your students learn much English through TV, music and the Internet?
- Are the students interested in TV, music and the Internet?
8. How do you make use of the students' proficiencies and experiences of TV, music and the
Internet in the classroom?
9. Would you want to use TV, music and the Internet more than you do at the moment in your
teaching?
10. Would you like to add something?