Motivational Factors in Textbooks: Textbook Usage and its Influences on Pupil Self-Learning

Motivationsfaktorer i läroböcker: läroboksanvändning och dess inflytande på elevers självständiga lärande

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the role that textbooks have within the subject of English in Swedish secondary school, years 7-9, and the psychological impact textbooks may or may not have on pupil language learning. Theories used in this study support the fact that pupils who are able to independently develop their language skills are more successful language learners, including the self-efficacy theory, theories about motivation, i.e. the Self-Determination Theory and the L2 Motivational Self System, and learning independence. Mixed methodology was applied to extract both quantitative and qualitative data. In this study, three Swedish EFL teachers from years 7-9 were interviewed to determine their attitudes towards textbook use during their everyday teaching and their views on how textbooks impact their pupils’ achievements of self-efficacy and independence. Additionally, 212 Swedish pupils in years 7-9 answered questions on their perception of their textbooks through a digital questionnaire. The interviewed teachers, as well as the pupils’ responses, showed reservations regarding textbook usage, especially regarding the ability for pupils to relate to textbook content, and the lack of support for pupils with learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia). Pupils also responded that they were not using their respective textbooks independently. Analysis of the results shows that textbooks, whether digital or printed, are not useful EFL learning tools on their own, as they do not fully support pupil self-learning. Most notably, the interviewed teachers and the pupils’ responses both signal a lack of relatedness in the contents of their textbooks. Future studies should focus on intrinsic motivation through pupil perceptions of relatedness in textbooks.

Keywords: Textbook, psychological factors, L2 learning motivation, self-efficacy, motivation, learning independence, SDT, L2MSS, EFL, digital, physical, Secondary school
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1. Introduction

The Swedish secondary school syllabus for English aims to provide pupils with a variety of tools to develop their knowledge of English and enlarge their ability to adapt the use of English to different situations and purposes (Skolverket, 2018, p. 34). When referring to these tools, the syllabus does not exemplify further what these tools mean. Language tools could perhaps be geared towards an array of strategies of which the pupils should have knowledge of as well as an ability to use them. The ambiguity of the syllabus does not aid the teacher in making these conclusions. However, strategies for reading and listening are mentioned in the knowledge requirements, perhaps hinting at what tools should help achieve. These strategies are not further exemplified but left to the teacher’s competencies and didactic knowledge.

Despite the considerable leeway for teachers to adapt and explore the subject of English in their way, the syllabus for English stresses a requirement for the compulsory school to ascertain that their pupils work responsibly and can expound this responsibility to their learning and developing their abilities (Skolverket, 2018). While reports show an inherent positive attitude from teachers towards pupils taking responsibility for their own learning (Skolinspektionen, 2010), there is little actual accommodated space in the syllabus focused on pupils’ self-learning, apart from the actual requirement. The syllabus focuses mainly on what content should be covered, and not to which extent or with what tools, which in return could result in pupils’ self-learning getting lower priority than, for example, a more lecture-like teaching style. Since it is not accommodated in the syllabus, this falls into the teachers’ prerogative.

Teachers, consequently, must keep the balance between giving pupils the means to work independently and confidently, and giving themselves a manageable workload. A way of achieving this balance is by using teaching materials that allow for the pupils to develop their learning independence, while still being a trustworthy source of input and activities that are in line with the national syllabus. According to a report by Skolverket (2006), the most used teaching material in the classroom for English as a foreign language (EFL) in Sweden are pre-produced textbooks, with 56% of the participating teachers in year 9 responding that they
use textbooks every lesson, and another 27% responding that they use the textbooks to some degree every month. The high degree to which textbooks are used may be problematic. For example, concerns expressed by teachers in a quality review by Skolinspektionen (2011) argued that a too-heavy reliance on textbooks might stifle the teacher’s own creativity and knowledge, and by extension spilling over on the pupils, controlling and limiting independent pupils thoughts. Even though learning materials are not the only factor affecting pupils self-learning, they are a central part of English teaching, according to the study above (Skolverket 2006) and as such, they should be considered when researching how to enhance pupil self-learning. Additionally, digital textbooks have risen in popularity (IT-pedagogen, 2017) with the recent shift towards digitalisation in Swedish institutions, including the Swedish compulsory school in accordance with the national digitalisation strategy (Utbildningsdepartementet, 2017). This is why it is of interest to study the differences between printed textbooks and digital textbooks, and in what way they define how pupils are able to take responsibility for their own learning.

As described by Benson (2012), the view on language learning within the academic community has shifted over the past 50 years, from an approach that was teacher and subject-focused, to a learner-centeredness that is now part of every teacher’s basic training (p. 30). This approach, which puts the learner in the foreground, has allowed for diversity within the classroom, and individual differences in language learning have been acknowledged. The differences include several psychological factors, such as motivations and learning styles, which all impact language learning, alongside outside factors such as choice of pedagogy and learning environments (Benson, 2012). These types of factors are sometimes referred to as cognitive factors (e.g. Kovach, 2018), but for clarity, they will henceforth be referred to as psychological factors in this paper.

Firstly, one such psychological factor is the theory of self-efficacy. Bandura (1977) describes self-efficacy as the belief that one’s behaviour will result in achieving a certain goal. A strong sense of self-efficacy among learners will give them confidence in setting high educational goals for themselves, and moreover, trusting that they possess the necessary skills to reach a successful outcome will help them internalise said goals (Bandura, 1977). Zimmerman et al.
put this theory in an educational context by studying how high school pupils’ self-efficacy beliefs and goals correlated with their final grades. The strong presence of textbooks in Swedish schools poses the question of how they affect pupil self-efficacy.

Secondly, another psychological factor is motivation, which has been studied extensively (e.g., Dörnyei, 2009; Henry, 2010), with several theories on the subject as a result. The self determination theory (SDT) as put forward by Ryan and Deci (2017) examines how the satisfaction of basic needs, common for all humans, have an impact on learning motivation. Additionally, the second language motivational self system (L2MSS, Dörnyei, 2009) argues that second language (L2) learning is contingent on how the learner sees themselves using the L2 in the future. What types of texts and activities that the learners are faced within the classroom are related to both these theories, and they can therefore be applied when examining textbook usage.

Thirdly, the concept of learning independence is described by Schunk (1989a, 1991) to have an impact on pupil motivation. The author claims that there are five cognitive factors in learning independence, including goal setting and modelling, that impact L2 learning motivation. As described above, motivation is a key psychological factor that may differ between individual pupils in the modern-day Swedish classroom, which is why it should be included when studying the impact that textbooks may have on psychological factors within L2 learning.

Previous studies on the area of research, that is on pupil motivation, self-efficacy and independent learning, have been conducted in several different contexts. For example, pupil self-efficacy and motivation have been measured in relation to socio-economic factors such as parental education level, household income, and community safety (e.g., Turuk, 2008), or to examine gender differences (e.g., Dörnyei, 2009; Henry, 2010). Furthermore, there have been studies concerning printed and digital textbooks and their effect on pupil motivation, self-efficacy and independent learning that has targeted university students (e.g., Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2013) and pupils in elementary school (e.g., Oman, 2013) with English as their first language (L1), which poses many interesting questions and possible
future opportunities when it comes to the attitude and approach to textbooks in the EFL classroom. However, no research on the effect that textbooks may have on pupil motivation, self-efficacy and independent learning in the age group corresponding with Swedish year 7-9 has been conducted, nor any similar studies where EFL acquisition has been the focus. It is therefore of interest to explore any connection that might exist between the most used learning material, the textbook (Skolverket, 2006), and the psychological factors of language learning that facilitate EFL learning, in a Swedish context. Are pupils provided with exercises that are engaging and transferable, as well as with understandable instructions that support learning independence in the classroom? Do they have topics that are relevant to pupils’ personal experiences and interests?
2. Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to examine the role that textbooks have within the subject of English in Swedish secondary school, years 7-9, and the psychological impact textbooks may or may not have on pupil language learning. As textbooks are the most prominent teaching material employed in the Swedish classroom for English (Skolverket, 2006), it is of interest to study how textbooks are used by teachers, and also received by pupils in order to understand what role they play in language learning. The syllabus for English places weight on pupil independence within language learning (Skolverket, 2018, p.34). Furthermore, the curriculum expresses that the compulsory education should promote a “lifelong desire to learn” (Skolverket, 2018, p.5). Therefore, this study aims to explore how textbooks incite pupils to acquire English independently. The research questions are as follows:

- What factors impact the participating teachers’ reliance on textbooks in the Swedish EFL Classroom?
- How are different psychological factors of motivation related to language learning affected by the use of textbooks for English?
- How do pupils perceive the contents and structure of textbooks for English?
  - How do pupils perceive digital textbooks compared to printed textbooks?
3. Literature Review

This paper examines teachers’ practices regarding textbook usage, and the presence of psychological factors involved in pupil language learning. This section provides an overview of textbook usage in Sweden and Swedish textbook policies, as well as a theoretical framework behind a number of psychological factors inciting independent learning, including theories on self-efficacy, motivation and learning independence. The aim is to define these theories and place them in the context of textbooks in order to examine how EFL textbooks are used, and structured, in Swedish Secondary schools, as well as examine in what way textbooks impact psychological factors in pupil language learning.

3.1 Swedish Textbook Policy

In Swedish curriculum theory, textbooks, digital and printed alike, exist under the broader definition of teaching materials ("läromedel"), and are therefore sometimes hard to decipher from its umbrella term. Teaching material research has historically been divided into multiple sub-groups (e.g., process-, product-, and user-oriented research), each focused on different parts in the process of using teaching materials, and while the research and implementation of teaching materials in the Swedish curriculum, this research is often teacher-centered (Skolverket, 2006).

From a historical perspective, teaching materials have been one of the governing factors used to achieve what has been labelled as “Equivalent Education”. Equivalent Education is described in the most recent edition of the curriculum as education adapted to each pupil’s circumstances and needs based on their respective backgrounds, previous experiences and knowledge (Skolverket, 2018). Teaching materials and their accessibility play a large part in making sure that pupils have equal access to their education. For example, using a digital textbook might be of disadvantage to pupils who do not have access to a stable internet connection at home, whereas using a physical textbook might be unfavourable to neurodivergent pupils or pupils who need to have texts read aloud to them.
The 1992 Curriculum Committee stated that the teaching materials often constituted the entirety of the realised curriculum (Skolverket, 2006, p.13). Historically, the Swedish curriculum has undergone a process of decentralisation, where the government previously regulated and impacted the choice and use of teaching materials at a micro level to set the framework and allocate financial resources.

The curriculum contained, in contrast to its current state, more detailed regulations on the content of teaching and implementation. Commentary material and instructions on the curriculum for different subjects often included minute and detailed examples of suitable teaching materials. In comparison, the Swedish curriculum today leans on the teachers' professional responsibility and freedom to choose methods to achieve set goals. The goals set by the national syllabi are undeniably the same for the same course, regardless of where in the country it is given, but how the goals are achieved and which teaching materials are used can look different, for example depending on local interpretations and adaptation to the pupils’ different backgrounds and prerequisites (Skolverket, 2018).

In a report by Skolverket (2006), the use of teaching materials in the subjects of Art, English and Social studies was researched. It found that a majority of English teachers admitted to using textbooks each or almost every lesson, supplementing with listening exercises and fiction. Textbooks are also used in Social studies, but not to the same extent as in English, and teachers who teach Art or Social studies, varied the use of textbooks considerably more than the teachers of English. A majority of the teachers of English and Social studies completely or partly agreed with the statement that textbooks helped ensure that the teaching is in accordance with the compulsory school curriculum and syllabi. The textbook thus has a legitimising function in teachers' work. The same report claims that over 50% of English teachers in year 9 state that they use pre-produced textbooks every lesson, or every other lesson, at the same time as they claim that textbooks have too much control over their teaching (Skolverket, 2006). A later report shows that the use of textbooks in the EFL classroom strongly outweighed the use of internet-based media (Skolinspektionen, 2010).

The implementation of the newest curriculum, LGr11, came with the addition of a requirement on digitalisation. The curriculum states that the school is required to give
opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of digitalisation as well as “conditions to develop digital competence and an attitude that promotes entrepreneurship” (Skolverket, 2018, p.8). To keep in accordance with this new requirement, municipalities have updated their documents on, and approach to, digitalisation, referred to as “informations- och kommunikationsteknik” (Information and Communication Technology, ICT). These ICT-documents often exist in school-focused versions, meant to be used by each school within that municipality to set the standard of how the digitisation process should be approached. However, when looking at the ICT-documents belonging to the three municipalities that we have conducted our interviews and questionnaires in, neither of these documents present an approach that is particular about the usage of textbooks. Instead, these documents are focused on providing the school and its teachers with digital strategies, and digital literacy.

3.2 Textbooks

The nature of a textbook differs depending on the format. This section offers descriptions of selected printed and digital textbooks commonly used in Swedish schools, followed by a comparison of their key features from a learner perspective in order to examine whether their contents and structure have any impact on psychological factors in L2 learning.

3.2.1 Printed textbooks

The printed textbook series Magic! (Hedencrona, Smed-Gerdin & Watcyn-Jones, 2014) for years 7-9 is here used as a representative printed textbook that has similar counterparts, for example, Happy (Peterson, 2013) and Wings (Glover, 2003), commonly used in Swedish schools. “Magic!” is formatted around chapters, called units, that revolve around a theme. The themes could be something deemed to be a familiar or relevant topic for the pupils, such as “famous inventions”, or it could put focus on an English speaking country, for instance, “New Zealand”. The units include texts of various types: non-fiction, interviews, fiction, poetry, letters and blog posts, and so on. Most of the texts are available to listen to through the publisher’s website, but it requires a username and password. Magic! is divided into three separate books for each year: first is the classbook which contains all the units, as well as a
grammar section at the back. Next is the word trainer, which has word lists that go with the texts from the classbook, and space for the pupils to practice writing. Last is a workbook that has exercises to go with the units. They cover different language abilities, such as writing and speaking, yet many simpler exercises like grammar gap words and crossword puzzles are common too. The teacher material that accompanies each unit comes with a test that the teacher may choose to use.

The structure of Magic! is repeated throughout the book series, with the same types of exercises often reoccurring. This offers stability to the pupils once they have learned how the material works that may be supportive to some whilst boring to others.

3.2.2 Digital textbooks

The digital textbook that is used as a representative example in this study is Gleerups digital (Gleerups, n.d.) but just as with the printed textbook, there are others like it (e.g. Nationalencyklopedin, Clio). Similar to the printed books, Gleerups digital is divided into units that contain texts, wordlists and exercises, but unlike Magic!, the units are not sorted after what year they are aimed at. There is also a grammar section, and two additional sections named “tool box”, which has links to resources, and “extra exercises”. There are a lot of interactive media besides plain texts, which are all linked and require navigational skills. An outside resource in the form of a word processing software or similar online service is sometimes required when the pupils are asked to write, which means they have to leave the Gleerup website regularly. Lastly, a self-evaluation finishes up each unit that encourages the pupils to reflect upon what skills and knowledge they have developed. Just as with Magic!, there is a test on each unit available in the teacher’s material.

3.2.3 Comparisons between printed and digital textbooks

Even though the content and overall organisation of the two types of textbooks above is somewhat similar, the structure and navigation are where the biggest difference lies from the perspective of the pupils. With the printed textbook it is easy for the pupils to get an overview of each section. For example, if they are asked to read the text on pages 42-44 and then do the exercises on page 45, with help from the grammar section on page 103, they know exactly
where to start and stop and can quite easily understand what is asked of them in that class. In a digital textbook, exercises are sometimes divided into subsections over several pages (e.g. Gleerups, n.d.) that require the pupils to navigate in between them, making it harder to immediately see how long a text is, or get the scope of the exercises.

When it comes to exercises concerning vocabulary and grammar training, there are advantages to both textbook types. In the digital version, pupils can perform self-tests which provide immediate feedback on what they have to work more on, something that may take time to get from a teacher when working with printed books, and in that period, the pupil may well have moved on and forgotten about the context of the vocabulary or grammar. On the other hand, there are multiple studies (e.g. Smoker et al, 2009; Aragon-Mendizabal et al., 2016) that suggest that writing words and notes by hand are more beneficial for memorising than typing.

Regarding listening comprehension, there are audio files available for the pupils with both types of textbooks. If these are included in the teacher material, pupils would only have the option of listening all at the same time a limited number of times. However, time and interest from the pupils are the only limitations to how many times they can listen to texts and questions if the audio files are made available through websites. In that case, the audio files provided by a digital textbook are more readily available as a printed textbook requires actions from the pupils in the form of finding the right website, logging in and so forth, while it is all in one place with the digital material (e.g. Gleerups, n.d.).

There are many other factors that separate the two types of textbooks that will not be discussed in detail in this study, such as the benefits or hindrances for pupils with learning disabilities, the risks of textbooks getting lost or technology breaking down, and the endless distractions offered to a teenager through the internet when working with computers. These call for further research in the future.
3.3 Self-efficacy

The self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1977) aims to explain how the goals that people set are contingent on their belief in their own abilities when performing the tasks leading up to that goal. Self-efficacy differs from self-confidence in that it is specifically the belief in a skill set required to perform a certain task, whereas self-confidence refers to the belief in one’s ability without regard to any specific task. To exemplify, high self-efficacy is believing that one will succeed on a test because sufficient preparations have been made, while high self-confidence is believing that one will succeed on a test due to prior experiences or general knowledge on the subject. In other words, the expectations that a person has on their own behaviour is a factor in the expectations that they have on the end result when setting a certain goal. For instance, if a pupil is to believe that they can pass an English test, they have to trust that they have the necessary skills to study for that test, such as the ability to understand, memorise and apply grammatical rules. The pupil then believes that their behaviour will lead to a certain, in this case positive, outcome. In light of this, a textbook may or may not be an aid for pupils to use when acquiring these skills, which in turn will raise their self-efficacy beliefs. In Bandura’s (1977) theory, people with low self-efficacy are likely to avoid situations where they have little trust in their own skills. In a school context, this could manifest in pupils being afraid of even trying to apply themselves since they cannot imagine themselves coping with what is asked of them.

Zimmerman et al. (1992), examined the self-efficacy theory from a learning perspective by studying how high school pupils’ self-efficacy beliefs and goals correlated with their final grades. They found that pupils who set high academic goals and had trust in their abilities to reach them received higher grades. Moreover, the higher self-efficacy beliefs a pupil had, the higher goals they set for themself. Through the sampling of pupil-perceived self-efficacy of learning strategies compared to their academic results, Zimmerman et al. (1992) concluded that perceived efficacy is a key factor in attaining higher grades. However, the second finding in this study was that the goals set by the parents and teachers of the participants were not adopted by the pupils as they were often considerably higher than the goals that the pupils set for themselves. As such, the beliefs that the pupils had in their self-efficacy was a stronger factor than outside pressure when assessing their future efforts. It could therefore be argued
that the teacher's role should be to help pupils attain and access the skills that they need to imagine their own success. Furthermore, pupils should then set goals that they can internalise themselves. In a Swedish educational context, this would mean that it is not enough to explain or concretise the knowledge requirements for the pupils, but they need to understand what skills it takes for them to get there. By understanding what skills they need to develop, their self-efficacy can be strengthened (Bandura, 1977).

The self-efficacy theory asserts that pupils not only need to be aware of what they're aiming for but also need assistance in developing confidence in their ability to do so (Zimmerman et al., 1992). To assist with this, textbooks are the most featured learning material for pupils (Skolverket, 2006). Textbooks are often structured in a way that progressively breaks down elements of language learning, such as vocabulary learning and reading comprehension, into manageable blocks designed with the intention to gradually help the pupils acquire new knowledge. When interpreting the theory of self-efficacy to include teaching materials, textbooks bear the potential to elevate pupil self-efficacy as long as both the structure and the contents are executed with the pupils in focus.

### 3.4 Motivation

For this study, which is situated in the context of second language (L2) learning, there is a need to set up a theoretical framework that not only describes how learning motivation can be elevated, but also one that specifically applies to motivation within L2 learning in order to better understand the psychological factors involved in the subject of English. There are differences in L2 learning motivation and general learning motivation, for example, the motivation behind learning English as an L2 is often directly related to the learner’s interests pursued in their free time, but also their hopes for a future career, according to the idea of an ideal-self described by Dörnyei (2009). This idea will be further defined in section 3.4.2. Being able to easily imagine a future use is not always the case with other subjects, such as Art, simply due to the fact that English is present within many different professions and cultural contexts familiar to the pupils. For these purposes, the self-determination theory, as well as the L2 motivational self-system, have been chosen as the two theoretical cornerstones at the base of both the research process and for the analysis of the motivation aspect in this
study. The first is chosen due to its views on general motivation as the result of basic need-satisfaction, which is relevant in an educational context. The other theory is chosen since it is specifically aimed at L2 learning motivation, and builds on the same ideas as the self-determination theory.

3.4.1 The self-determination theory

The self-determination theory (SDT) is described by Ryan and Deci (2017) as a psychological theory. It builds upon the concept of the self as a vital part of human nature that acts as a controller of behaviour and autonomous actions. Human nature, as stated by Ryan and Deci, is active and social, and always moving towards thriving, wellness and integrity, and as a result, people are motivated to learn and make progress (2017, p.9). However, they also point out that motivation is environmentally conditioned. In certain environments that do not satisfy the basic human psychological needs, individuals can become self-focused and demotivated. The authors claim three needs are common for all humans, namely:

a) autonomy - “the need to self-regulate one’s experiences and actions” (p. 10). This refers to the need to behave in congruence with one’s authentic interests and values. In a school context, this means that pupils need work that includes aspects that are relevant to their interests and their world views. Schoolwork must be structured in a way where pupils have a choice of what to work on, to an extent, and an element that enables self-regulation should also be included. According to SDT, an environment that does not support autonomy is overly controlling or demanding (p. 12).

b) competence - the “need to feel effectance and mastery” (p. 11). A pupil needs to feel that they are competent within the tasks that they are asked to perform, otherwise feelings of self-doubt and negative social comparisons can cause motivation to wane. In the classroom, competence can be supported through academic challenges that do not exceed the level of difficulty that is within the pupils’ reach. Secondly, correctly worded feedback that is positive and forward-focused can have a positive impact on pupils’ need for competence.

c) relatedness - the need for social inclusion and connectedness. Relatedness pertains to a feeling of being cared for, but also “belonging and feeling significant among others”
A supportive environment is inclusive and appreciative, and in a classroom context, a teacher may satisfy this need through relationship building.

Depending on how the needs mentioned above are being met, Ryan and Deci (2017) distinguish the two types of motivation that arise: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation, according to the authors, comes from a person's interests and values, such as the desire to learn a second language in order to pursue a career abroad, and can as such be labelled as autonomous. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is directly or indirectly controlled by outside factors, such as the fear of getting bad grades and thereby upsetting one’s parents. In a school context, Ryan and Deci (2017) state that extrinsic, controlled motivation leads to more superficial and less transferable learning since it does not stem from the pupil’s needs for well-being (p.18). Intrinsic motivation will lead to learning that can transcend the classroom walls since it stems from a place of sincere confidence and curiosity.

3.4.2 The L2 motivational self system

Dörnyei’s (2009) research on L2 learning is what constitutes the other motivation theory that will be used in this study; the L2 motivational self system (L2MSS). Similar to SDT, this theory involves the notion of an autonomous self. Moreover, the L2MSS presents the idea that people have the power to imagine different versions of their future selves, called possible selves. This entails what a person would like to become, what they might become, and finally, what they are afraid of becoming. Dörnyei (2009) makes a distinction between the ideal self; a future version of a person that they would like to be that is congruent with their interests and beliefs, and the ought self; the person they feel that outside influences (e.g., parents, teachers or societal norms) want them to be. An individual may very well imagine both types of future selves, depending on the situation they are in. Dörnyei (2009) connects two types of motivation to the two types of future selves, similar to the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation described in the SDT. Depending on whether a pupil imagines an ideal self, the person they would like to become, or the ought self, a future version that behaves in line with other people's wishes, their motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic respectively.
Firstly, the ideal self promotes intrinsic motivation. For example, suppose a pupil sees themselves as someone who can communicate with people online by the use of English and can imagine a future self that has both the skills and the opportunities to do so. In that case, they are likely to have higher motivation to learn than a classmate with a more negative attitude towards the subject of English. This type of motivation will lead to an approach where the pupil is studying for more than the sake of good grades. A pupil with high intrinsic motivation is likely to both retain what they learn for a longer period of time, and to put their knowledge to practical use, all the while enjoying the learning process more as they believe that it is closing the gap between their present selves and their future, ideal selves.

Secondly, the ought self promotes extrinsic motivation. If a young person's motivation stems from an image of a future self that agrees with what their parents and teachers wish them to be, they will not approach school with hopes for long-term rewards. Instead, they will approach school with an attitude of trying to become good enough in someone else's eyes, or even in fear of negative consequences such as failing a class. Extrinsic motivation can also consist of social constructs, such as peer pressure. According to Dörnyei (2009), it is not unusual that the wish to fit in with a social group (e.g., being “cool”) contrasts with the individual’s wish to succeed and attain good results in school. Therefore, it is important to find a balance between the ideal self and the ought self that promotes motivation and learning.

Notably, Dörnyei (2009) emphasises that the future self guides cannot stand as the only factor to success, but they have to be part of a package. It is not enough to have a vivid image of a successful future self without the means of getting there. The education system should encourage pupils to think about who they want to become, but even more importantly, it should provide its pupils with all the skills, knowledge and strategies to help them achieve their ideal selves. When accompanied by plausible action plans and well-thought-out scaffolding, such as high-quality textbooks, the L2MSS can be a useful motivational tool to be used in an EFL classroom.
3.5 Learning independence

Learning independence, or independent learning, is the final theory relating to a psychological factor in L2 learning presented in this study. It is the sum of many external factors resulting in an impact on pupils’ academic motivation. Schunk (1991) attributes five cognitive factors to the direct impact on learning independence, namely (1) goal setting; (2) rewards; (3) information processing; (4) modelling; and (5) attributional feedback.

Goal setting is considered an important cognitive process affecting motivation and learning independence (Schunk, 1989a, 1991). Pupils who either set a goal themselves or are given a goal by a teacher are more likely to experience a desire for attaining this goal, and experience a sense of commitment to attempt the task at hand. When working on the task, pupils with a set goal will engage in activities that they believe will lead to reaching this goal, and therefore experience a sense of self-efficacy, which is then substantiated as the pupils connect reaching the goal with the task progress they have already mastered. Close-at-hand, specific goals are better at enhancing self-efficacy, and while easier goals enhance efficacy and motivation early on in skill learning, difficult goals prove more effective as pupils are given the opportunity to develop their skills (Schunk, 1991).

Rewards work in similar ways. When rewards are linked with pupil accomplishments, for example, points or prizes, they convey that the pupil has progressed in their learning and thus functions as a receipt of progress. Rewards simply for participation do not convey the same type of progress information, and therefore does not give the same motivation to persist through difficult tasks.

Information processing and modelling both reflect on how pupils cognitively receive information around them, both by purely processing academic material (information processing) as well as observing others perform (modelling). Regarding information processing, emphasis is placed on how pupils experience their comprehension, as Schunk (1989b) argues that pupils that struggle to believe in their ability to handle material comprehension also hold a low sense of efficacy for learning it. In comparison, pupils who believe that they are capable of handling the material comprehension feel more efficacious.
Modelling, in turn, works in similar ways. When pupils observe peers successfully complete tasks, that conveys to them that they, too, are able to complete the task and motivates them to attempt it. However, observing peers failing at a task may dissuade pupils from attempting the task, lowering their perceived efficacy.

Attributional feedback, i.e. feedback that focuses on pupils’ abilities and efforts, is also linked by Schunk (1991) to learning independence. Emphasis is placed on what, and when, this attributional feedback is received, and effort feedback (“You have been working hard”) is found to have a greater impact on pupil self-efficacy than emphasising effort benefits (“You have to work hard to succeed”). However, Schunk (1991) argues that ability feedback after early successes (“You are good at this”) enhances self-efficacy and, in turn, skill better than effort feedback.

Out of these five cognitive factors, three are directly linked to the teacher inserting themselves into pupil learning, thus providing the pupil with the scaffolding necessary to provide the best possible learning opportunities for themselves. Schunk (1991) continues to validate this teacher insertion as a valuable and important part of the process to reach learning independence. Furthermore, Schunk (1989a) argues that the previously explained self-efficacy theory is not the only factor influencing pupil behaviour nor is it necessarily the most important factor. However, pupils with high self-efficacy may reach a stronger academic belief and may be able to maintain higher performance standards. Bandura (1989) agrees, stating that self-efficacy is hypothesised to influence the choice and direction of much human behaviour when pupils are exhibiting adequate skills, positive outcome expectations, and personally valued outcomes.
4. Methods

The aim of the study is to investigate the relation between teaching materials in the form of textbooks and pupil self-efficacy and motivation. A mixed methodology was used to do so: qualitative interviews to get the observational perspective from teachers were performed, as well as quantitative questionnaires to understand more about how pupils perceive their textbooks’ impact on motivation, self-efficacy and learning independence. Including both perspectives in this manner aimed to supply more nuanced results in order to answer the research questions and to be able to discuss in what manner English teachers use textbooks in their EFL classroom, what they think of them, and how pupils perceive the textbook’s impact on their language learning.

Fekjaer (2016) points out that using a mix of methods can be effective as long as both are carried out in a satisfactory manner. Furthermore, Bryman (2018) states that there are several reasons to question the traditional distinction between qualitative and quantitative methods, especially the notion that the first should be only associated with social science research and the other with natural science research. Bryman (2018) exemplifies by bringing up the common preconceived conception that quantitative research always aims to test a pre-formed hypothesis, when in reality, the exploratory character of a survey study, a common tool used in quantitative studies, often generates theories and concepts. Even though a questionnaire, such as the one in this study, is of a quantitative nature there is still an element of qualitative interpretation both in the process of selecting and constructing the questions and later in the analysis, as pointed out by Gilmore (2004). For these reasons, a mixed-method approach is well suited for this study.

4.1 Participants

For this study, three interviews were carried out with three teachers working at two different lower secondary schools (year 7-9) with somewhat dissimilar constitutions regarding pupils’ socioeconomic and geographical backgrounds. Additional data was gathered through questionnaires that were given to approximately 500 pupils in four different schools, in which
212 questionnaires were returned. For the interviews as well as the questionnaires, the schools were chosen due to a variety in location and socioeconomic condition and are all familiar to the writers from either private connections, work experience courses, or from employment.

Table 1.
Participants of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Altered name</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Working experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>English, Swedish</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>English, Spanish</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>Rosa</td>
<td>English, Spanish</td>
<td>19 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interviews were carried out with three teachers, as shown in table 1 above. Their names have been altered for anonymity, so they will be known henceforth as Jenny, Anna and Rosa.

Two of the participants, Jenny and Anna, work at the same school, although they do not teach the same years and as such, their experiences will differ. Furthermore, it was discovered through the interviews presented in the results section further down that even though they use the same textbooks, they have very different opinions.

4.2 Materials

With the theoretical framework previously described in mind, an interview guide and a questionnaire were constructed based on the research questions and aim of this study.

4.2.1 Interview guide

Semi-structured interviews with the teachers were performed to get their perspectives and views on textbook development based on experiences throughout their careers. The semi-structured form was used as it is closer to a real-life conversation than a strictly structured interview. A strictly structured interview would restrict the use of follow-up questions and clarifying statements and thus make analysing the results difficult.
Subsequently, a semi-structured interview form was favoured for these interviews, a form that allows for follow-up questions and clarifying statements as well as aiding in finding overarching themes and patterns.

The interviews are structured around several central topics or themes, following Kvale’s (2007, p. 70) suggestion. The themes used were “teacher textbook usage”, “pupil self-efficacy and motivation” and “alignment to policies”. For each theme, 3-5 open-ended questions were prepared, accompanied by a number of keywords and possible follow-up questions. The initial questions asked for background information, such as how long they have been teaching and in what subjects. Subsequently, questions pertaining to how much, and in what manner, the participants employed their textbooks. Finally, the main part of the interview was formed in accordance with the research questions: how are psychological factors in language learning met in common textbooks? An example of a question is “What are your thoughts on the textbook’s level of difficulty?” The aim of this question was to get the participants’ thoughts on how the need for competence, as described in SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2017) is satisfied.

4.2.2 Questionnaire

In order to investigate pupil perception, questionnaires were used to include as many participants as possible. The aim of the questionnaire as opposed to the interview was to examine a general tendency in attitude and perception, which is why a questionnaire was favoured over interviewing a smaller number of pupils. The questionnaire was sent out to schools in three different local municipalities to ensure that the results would not be affected by the homogeneity of one particular group of pupils. The schools were also different in which textbook they used regularly, including the previously mentioned Magic! series. In total, the questionnaire was sent out to approximately 500 pupils in years 7-9.

The questionnaire, included in appendix B, consisted of 16 questions. The first three questions asked for the year the pupils were in, if their current English textbook was physical or digital, and if they had experience with digital textbooks at all. The remaining 14 questions were composed in accordance with a symmetric five-level Likert scale, meaning that the
neutral option had the same amount of options (2) on either side of it (Joshi et al., 2015). Consequently, the numbers in each question of the questionnaire translate as follows; 1 = definitely not, 2 = probably not, 3 = possibly, 4 = probably, and finally, 5 = definitely.

The Likert scale provides close-ended questions, and is favoured when the aim is to find out about the questionnaire-takers perception of a single phenomenon of interest, which is why this questionnaire was built on it. Similarly, a five-level Likert scale is favourable when assessing opinions, attitudes or behaviours, as was the case in this study (Joshi et al., 2015).

Finally, the questionnaire was constructed in Swedish, to aid the pupils in completing the questionnaire without teacher assistance, which could influence the pupils’ responses.

4.3 Procedure

The interviews were performed on three different occasions in November and December 2021 through video calls. Each interview took between 10-20 minutes. The interviews were carried out one-on-one so as not to outnumber the participant, and thereby causing discomfort. For the same purpose, the participants got the choice to do the interview in either Swedish or English in accordance with what they felt most relaxed with. Two of the teachers chose Swedish, and the third English. The interviews’ audio was recorded, with consent, and then immediately transcribed. The answers were then sorted after the themes in the interview guide and analysed. Answers not pertaining to the aim and purpose of this study were omitted.

The questionnaire was sent out to seven different teachers in three different local municipalities. Having the statistical opportunity of reaching 500 pupils, 212 responded within the two weeks that the questionnaire was available. Although it implies an answer rate of 42%, the number of responses received was still deemed more than sufficient to draw statistical conclusions. The questionnaire was conducted through Google Surveys, and the data collected were analysed with the help of Google Surveys’ analytical tool, as well as a breakdown in Google Sheets for the ability to connect similarities grade responses.
When applying a Likert scale, a decision of how to use the responses has to be made. As with most scale-based data methods, the standard deviation will most likely be normally distributed - with more respondents going for the middle ground (3rd) option, and less on either side. Therefore, it has been argued that the Likert scale median should be applied to measure central tendency, instead of putting full value into every answer (Sullivan & Artino, 2013). Since the Likert scale in this questionnaire is five-level, answer three will have received the most responses, statistically. However, if responses one and two (definitely not and probably not) have received more votes than responses four and five (probably and definitely), that would indicate the central tendency towards the negative responses (one and two).

4.4 Ethical considerations

The Swedish council of research ethics (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017) defines the concept of secrecy in research. While public documents are public on general principle, this does not include research. Swedish law allows and calls for the protection of individuals participating in research (SFS 2003:460, 2021; Vetenskapsrådet, 2017). When approaching participating teachers by email, their secrecy was guaranteed from this aspect, and they were also informed about the aim of this paper and the nature of the questions they would be asked if willing to participate. The teachers approached for distribution of the questionnaire were also assured by email that no personal data would be collected at all for the sake of their pupils.

Regarding the Swedish council of research ethics’ (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017) requirement of confidentiality, all participants were assured that they would all remain anonymous at all times. Further, the participants were informed that the recorded interviews and data collected through the questionnaire would be used for this research only, in congruence with the utilisation requirement posed by the Swedish council of research ethics (Vetenskapsrådet, 2002). The recorded interviews and data were subsequently stored on a secure drive and destroyed at the point of publication of this study.

The questions were carefully constructed so as to not ask for any type of data that could be regarded as sensitive. For the questionnaire, no personal data at all was asked for, or collected
automatically, and for the interview, the participants were asked about years of teaching and other subjects taught - although they were able to opt-out of this question if they so wished. When presenting the results further, both the participating teachers and pupils will be kept fully anonymous, which is in line with the ethical guidelines published by the Swedish council of research ethics in God forskningssett (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017).
5. Results

In this section, the results from the teacher interviews and the pupil questionnaire will be presented separately, due to the different forms of reports that are included in a mixed methodology study. Further discussion of the findings presented below will take place in a separate section.

5.1 Interviews

Neither of the three interviewed teachers has any influence over the choice of textbooks in their classroom, so they have to settle for the books that the school management, or in Rosa’s case the municipality, has decided on. While both Jenny and Anna have some experience using digital textbooks, they are currently using printed textbooks. On one occasion, Jenny requested digital textbooks from her and Anna’s school. Unfortunately, the request was denied due to budget restrictions. Rosa has a digital textbook. However, some pupils still get to work with printed versions of the same textbook, namely those who have learning disabilities or other types of exceptional situations, such as pupils with autism or other neurodivergent diagnoses. She explains that for these pupils, printed materials seem to be easier to navigate. All teachers agree that most pupils seem to like printed textbooks as they want something physical to hold in their hands, and that the pupils get a better overview of what they are doing, which in turn helps them plan out their time in class. On a negative note, Jenny adds that digital materials of any sort offer more distractions as well.

The interviewed teachers all have different approaches to how much they rely on the textbook: Anna states that her pupils are working on the textbook for almost every lesson unless they are doing a project, while Jenny’s only uses it once or twice every month, and at those times it is mostly looked at as a reference. Rosa is not satisfied with her textbook and therefore she only uses it a couple of times per semester. Jenny and Rosa both report that their pupils seem bored by the structure of the book and how the same type of formula is often repeated “...many pupils were so tired of having this systematic manner of working - reading a text, then bring the activity book, cross over or fill in some sort of exercises, and then be
done” says Jenny. On the other hand, Anna claims that her pupils seem happy with their books, judging by the fact that they have never expressed anything to the contrary. While Jenny claims to give feedback on every written exercise that her pupils’ hand in, Anna says that she mostly uses the handed in material when assessing, and that her pupils instead get direct feedback and help in class during the lessons.

As a reason for being dissatisfied with the textbook that she uses, Rosa finds that the level of difficulty is too low for her pupils, especially in years 8 and 9. In contrast, the other two teachers express that the difficulty level in the textbooks is mostly on par with the pupils’ level of English, and they offer individual options like extra exercises for pupils who find the books too easy. However, Anna states that there is not much help offered to pupils with learning or language disabilities, apart from audio files that accompany written texts that dyslectic pupils can benefit from. Jenny adds that the textbook she uses has sections that offer good strategies for writing, like how to structure a text, but not enough strategies for reading, speaking or listening. Similarly, Rosa and Anna say that listening and reading comprehension are the areas where their books are lacking the most in terms of both variation and in the amount of exercises offered.

When it comes to the contents of the textbooks, Anna finds a couple of the themes and texts to be either boring, or not relatable to the pupils’ interests. Anna adds that the pupils find them childish or ridiculous at times, and both she and Jenny have observed that the pupils are more active and engaged when they find the contents of the textbooks relatable. Rosa has the same issues with the topics in her textbook, and in addition, her pupils have a negative attitude towards the messy organisation of their textbook which makes them unwilling to relate to the contents. Nevertheless, Rosa claims that her pupils are ambitious and still do the work despite their aversion for their textbook.

Jenny has problems with the way the textbooks portray global English. She feels that the representation of English speaking countries is old fashioned, shallow and stereotypical, but tries to counteract this by teaching the pupils to be analytical and critical of the textbook content. She has observed that when the pupils get to work with chapters that they are
interested in, they seem to be more engaged and involved in the learning process. As an example, she describes how they read a text about Malala Yousafzai, a young education activist, and found the topic to be interesting enough for them to actively ask questions in class, look up words they did not know, and do further research on human rights activism without being prompted to do so. Anna uses the topics in the books as a starting point, but when she notices that the pupils are interested and active, she builds on them with related subjects relevant to the pupils’ lives: “last year, we worked with the West Indies and talked about slavery because it is included in the book, and then we started talking about modern-day racism and compared and we watched a video and talked about everyday racism…” (Anna).

The aim of this study is to examine the textbook usage among EFL teachers in Sweden, as well as to investigate what, if any, impact textbooks have on certain psychological factors associated with language learning according to pupils’ perception. Additionally, any discrepancies related to the above topics between printed and digital textbooks were studied. The results from the interview show that the participants consider several of the abilities that the pupils should develop (Skolverket, 2018) to be underrepresented in the textbooks. This may have a negative impact on pupil self-efficacy since believing that one possesses the necessary skills to achieve a goal is crucial to a strong sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). In a school setting, goals are related to grades, which in turn consist of knowledge requirements and certain skill sets. If the pupils are not supplied with opportunities to develop those skill sets, their belief in their ability to reach their goals will be impeded. Thus, working with textbooks may have a negative impact on self-efficacy.

Regarding pupil motivation, two of the teachers claim that their pupils are not engaged in the themes provided by the textbooks, which implies that the need for relatedness, as described by Ryan and Deci (2017), is not fully met. It could also mean that intrinsic motivation is diminished, as it is hard to imagine oneself using what they are learning from the books in the future. In other words, the ideal-self (Dörnyei, 2009) is not being nourished.
5.2 Questionnaire

In total, the questionnaire received 212 responses, with a relatively even spread in age (year 7, 40.1%, year 8, 27.4% and year 9, 32.5%). Out of these 212 respondents, 61.8% reported to be using physical textbooks in their English class (38.2% use digital textbooks); however, all but 18 of the respondents reported having experience with digital textbooks in at least one subject.

In terms of frequency of textbook usage (digital or physical) in the English classroom, most pupils answered in various degrees that they use it sometimes, but not all the time, while only 5.7% responded that they used it every lesson, and 15.6% never used their textbook. Of those who responded that they never used the textbook, 67% belong to year 7. Similarly, of the 12 respondents who answered that they used their textbook every English lesson, 66% belong to year 7.

Reading comprehension was reported as the most utilised subject area when using the textbooks, and listening comprehension was the least used. In terms of what sort of tasks they were faced with, discussion tasks and writing tasks both showed a similar level of usage with 65.6% and 66% respectively. Multiple Choice Questions were reported to be used the least, with 32.5%.

Regarding pupil perception of their textbooks in English, pupils reported having a prominent middle ground attitude in several questions, as is expected when applying a Likert scale. With option 3 being the middle ground answer, representing “possibly”, it received over 30% of the responses on all questions referring to pupil perception on textbook usage. However, option 5, representing “Definitely” on the Likert scale, never received more than 10% of the responses when it came to pupil perception of textbook usage.

Figure 1

“To what extent do you feel that you are able to use your textbook if there is something in your English education that you do not understand?”
“To what extent do you feel that you are able to use your textbook if there is something in your English education that you want more knowledge of?”

Furthermore, when straying from the statistical top answer in every question, the general attitude of pupil perception was that pupils do not perceive their textbooks as helpful for independent work. 48.5% report that they did not perceive the textbook to be helpful when needing additional help, as shown in figure 1, and 38.7% report that they did not perceive the textbook to be helpful when looking for additional challenges, as shown in figure 2.

In terms of pupil perception on if the instructions in physical textbooks and digital textbooks are easy or hard to understand, physical textbooks had a wider spread throughout all of the
responses, while only 19% of respondents perceived the instructions in digital textbooks to be difficult or very difficult. This number was 30% when applied to physical textbooks.

**Figure 3**

“To what extent do you feel that you are able to relate to the contents of your textbook?”

Furthermore, as shown in figure 3 above, less than 5% of all respondents perceive their textbook to be completely relevant to their interests and opinions (option 5), whilst 13,2% of the respondents claimed to not relate to their textbook at all, and 25,5% claimed to relate very little. Although 17,9% of respondents claimed to relate somewhat to the textbook, the number of respondents who related little or not at all to their textbook (38,7%) outweighed the number of respondents who related partially or completely (22,6%).

**Figure 4**

“To what extent do you prefer using digital or physical textbooks?”

[Bar chart showing preferences between digital and physical textbooks]
Finally, as shown in figure 4 above, 40% of pupils responded that they preferred or strongly preferred using a physical textbook, while 30% responded that they preferred or strongly preferred digital textbooks. 29% responded having no particular preference on the choice between physical or digital textbooks.

The results from the questionnaire show that a majority of pupils use textbooks in the subject of English regularly. However, the general perception is that they do not provide help when something needs to be clarified for the pupils, nor do they provide enough specialisation on subjects the pupils are interested to learn more about. Further, a third of the respondents find the contents of the textbooks to be unrelatable, completely or for the most part, with no connection to their interests and opinions. Thereby, pupils perceive that both the structure and the contents are lacking, according to the results of this study.

Finally, the last research question in this study was to examine whether pupils perceive any differences between printed and digital textbooks. The results show little differences, but it is notable that more pupils struggle with instructions in printed textbooks.
6. Discussion

This section contains a discussion of the results in order to connect them to the psychological factors previously presented; self-efficacy, motivation, and learning independence. It also connects the results to Swedish textbook policy, the Swedish curriculum and the syllabus for English.

6.1 Swedish textbook policy and steering documents

When discussing textbooks and teaching materials from the perspective of equivalency, all three teachers somewhat motivate the need of keeping the teaching accessible and equal to all pupils. Rosa, who regularly uses a digital textbook, uses a physical textbook with the pupils who have learning disabilities or for some reason need a textbook that is easier to navigate. Rosa argues that a physical textbook fills this gap, although Anna claims that she is unhappy with the number of adaptations available to, for example, dyslexic pupils. While this might be individual to each teacher, the textbook they use, or even each pupil, this raises the issue that there is perceived disapproval regarding equivalency in textbooks, and by extension, education. Keeping in mind that most pupils choose not to turn to their textbooks when in need of extra support, as well as the higher number of pupils who perceive the instructions in physical textbooks to be harder than that of digital textbooks, it should be questioned whether or not textbooks actually provide pupils with an equivalent education.

However, in line with the current curriculum, all three teachers expressed in their interviews the freedom with which they are able to plan and carry out their lessons. Even two teachers working at the same school, Jenny and Anna, described different approaches to their teaching in general, as well as their usage of textbooks. This is consistent with the historical decentralisation of the curriculum, as reported by Jenny when she requested the change to digital textbooks, but was ultimately turned down by her and Anna’s employer.

Corresponding with the report made by Skolverket (2006), Anna admits to using textbooks every, or every other, lesson. She still admits to constraints provided by the textbooks, mostly
due to their repetitive nature in both texts and exercises. The repetitive nature of the
textbooks is also corroborated by the pupils’ responses, indicating that they perceive writing
and discussion exercises to be overrepresented in their textbooks.

6.2 Self-efficacy

In Bandura’s (1977) theory of self-efficacy, it is put forward that strong self-efficacy is felt
when a person believes that they possess a certain behaviour or set of skills that will lead to
them successfully reaching a goal. In the subject of English in Swedish schools, that may be
represented by pupils who are confident in reaching the goal of progress since they trust that
they possess the skills necessary. For example, knowledge about writing strategies that will
help them produce the different types of texts that may be asked of them. A textbook could
possibly be a helpful tool for pupils to attain those skills in an independent manner, but in this
study, almost half (48.5%) of the participating pupils answered that they do not feel that they
can look to their textbook for clarification or additional help. As established, textbooks are
the most used form of learning material in the classroom, but they are not the only accessible
resource that a pupil can utilise to raise their self-efficacy beliefs. In the end, it is the
teachers’ responsibility to educate pupils on how to find the information that they need,
whether it is from the textbook or from other sources.

According to the study conducted by Zimmerman et al. (1992), pupil self-efficacy often
correlates with final grades. When a pupil has a strong belief in their own academic abilities,
they tend to set higher goals. Furthermore, the authors state that the role of the teacher is
crucial when strengthening pupil self-efficacy and encouraging them to apply themselves in
class. With this in mind, teachers who find that there are useful sections in the textbooks
should aid their pupils in discovering these sections. Careful instruction from teachers of how
pupils can use them could be helpful, as well as continuous reminders to utilise the textbook
when searching for clarifications. This way, the textbook could play a more significant role in
supporting pupil self-efficacy than what seems to be the case in the schools where this study
was conducted.
6.3 Motivation

The impact that textbooks have on learning motivation, according to the results of this study, will here be discussed in accordance with the two theories on learning motivation that was presented earlier in this text, namely the self-determination theory and the L2 motivational self system.

6.3.1 Self-determination theory

As previously described, the self-determination theory published by Ryan and Deci (2017) states that an environment can act as either a support or a hindrance to motivation. Three basic needs should be met for a person to feel motivated: autonomy, competence and relatedness. The results of this study will now be discussed on the basis of these three needs.

First, when it comes to autonomy, one aspect of textbook usage is whether or not pupils have a choice. According to the interviewed teachers, the textbooks are often quite repetitive and “one-way”, so when working strictly with the textbooks, it seems fair to assume that the need for autonomy is not met in a satisfactory manner. However, Anna reported that she sometimes uses textbooks to introduce a topic to provide groundwork for continued independent work. For example, when they read about a human rights activist in the book, they could continue to do more research on the topic on their own, whether it be other activists, human rights history, or the current world situation concerning the topic. This teaching style allows the pupils to proceed with their learning in a way that is congruent with their own interests, within the limitations offered by the setting, and is thereby meeting the pupils’ need for autonomy.

Secondly, in this context competence refers to, among other things, the level of challenge that the pupils perceive they get from the textbooks. While two of the interviewed teachers agree that the textbook they use is age adequate in difficulty level, in contrast Rosa’s opinion is that it is much too easy, especially for the older pupils. She admitted that her pupils express a feeling of humiliation because they are not challenged enough, and subsequently, this is one of the main reasons that she does not let her pupils use the book very much.
Another aspect of textbook usage related to competence is how easily pupils can understand instructions. In this study, a majority of pupils (81%) reported that they found instructions in digital textbooks to be understandable, while fewer pupils (70%) felt the same thing about printed textbooks. Based on these numbers, the need for competence is better met by digital textbooks. As previously mentioned, competence is connected to pupils’ “need to feel effectance and mastery” (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 11) and therefore, a pupil who feels that they are able to understand the instructions independently may have more confidence in their competence to complete the task independently.

In the final analysis, relatedness refers to the need for feeling connected to one's environment, feeling cared for, and belonging to a social context. Two-thirds of the pupils (65.6%) in this study report that they often work socially, through discussion tasks, in their textbooks. This social activity, which comprises learning together with peers, could be a contributing factor in meeting the need for relatedness, as long as the pupils feel comfortable with the situation. This type of activity might adversely affect pupils’ motivation by forcing them to participate in social contexts that they did not choose themselves or by putting them in situations that make them feel self-conscious.

Further, how the pupils connect to the topics in the textbooks is also an aspect of the need for relatedness. In this study, all of the interviewed teachers report, to varying degrees, that their textbooks contain topics that are either boring or not related to the pupils’ interests. Among the pupils themselves, only 5% (see fig. 3) find the content relatable to their interests and opinions. Subsequently, this means pupils are asked to read texts that they are not interested in, memorise vocabulary that they cannot find a context for in their own spheres of interests, and so on. Moreover, the pupils may feel unseen and misunderstood by their teacher when they are continuously presented with material that does not interest them. Unsurprisingly, when the need for relatedness is thwarted in this manner, it has a negative impact on motivation.
In conclusion, textbooks themselves are neither positive nor negative in light of the SDT, it rather seems to be a matter of matching the right textbook to the pupil group with regards to difficulty levels, activities included, and topics. However, a textbook cannot successfully meet any of the needs as described above without a teacher to guide and aid the pupils.

6.3.2 The L2 motivational self system

As described in the literature review, the L2 motivational self system (L2MSS), as put forward by Dörnyei (2009), separates intrinsic from extrinsic motivation in L2 learning. Intrinsic motivation comes from a desire to become one's ideal future self. In an English learning context, pupils should ideally be able to imagine themselves as users of English in the future (privately, professionally, or both) in order to feel intrinsic motivation to learn.

A textbook could potentially contribute to the pupils' intrinsic motivation, if it contains a combination of subjects and activities that the pupils perceive to be useful in the future. When faced with texts about topics that the pupils find interesting and exercises that they see the direct or indirect use for, it could raise their motivation for L2 learning. One example of such an activity is practising dialogues that may occur when travelling to an English-speaking country. On the other hand, those types of texts or exercises need to be up-to-date in order to work in this desired way: when they start to sound too old-fashioned (like dialogues taking place in a travelling agency) or contain obsolete vocabulary (“traveller’s cheques”) they are unlikely to resonate with the pupils’ ideal-selves, and they will thereby have little impact on pupil intrinsic motivation. As previously stated, approximately 40% of the pupils in this study state that they relate very little, or not at all, to the topics in their textbooks, with an additional 40% filling in the middle answer representing they sometimes relate (see fig. 3). This points to the textbooks having little positive effect on the intrinsic motivation of pupils, since the content is not congruent with the pupils’ interests and thereby their future ideal-selves as described in L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2009).

According to two of the interviewed teachers in this study, their pupils are not engaged in the content in their textbooks, as the topics do not relate to their lives or their interests. In particular, Rosa’s pupils have expressed that they find the topics boring and ridiculous.
Nonetheless, they still do the work that is required of them, and in the school year 2020/2021, the final grades in English were higher in Rosa’s school than the nationwide average (Skolverket, 2021). This implies that the negative feelings that the pupils have towards the textbooks do not have much of an impact on their motivation, or their final results, but that could be due to the limited exposure that they get, with Rosa claiming to only use the textbook a couple of times per semester. Moreover, the desire to achieve high grades can be enough motivation on its own, whether it is intrinsic or extrinsic. For a learner that has ambitious plans that involve future studies at prestigious schools, high grades are closely connected to their ideal-self, and their dislike of the learning material might be of less importance.

### 6.4 Learning independence

Returning to Schunk’s (1991) five cognitive factors attributed to having a direct impact on learning independence, the use of textbooks seems to correspond with two; information processing and modelling. As Jenny states, her textbook provides adequate support when it comes to structure when writing, which could be argued that for pupils with high enough comprehension is enough to provide affirmation in how capable they are when processing information. As writing exercises are represented to a higher degree than, for example, listening comprehension, as both observed by the interviewed teachers and perceived by the pupil respondents, it is also possible to argue for an adequate amount of information accessible to benefit information processing. Similarly, the high representation of discussion exercises could benefit the pupils by providing an adequate amount of modelling opportunities, where pupils get to engage with their peers and see them successfully complete tasks and themselves attempting the same tasks in turn (Schunk, 1991).

Goal setting (Schunk, 1991) is a possibility when working with textbooks, and could be tied to Anna’s usage of the textbook as support when approaching projects. Creating projects with an obvious connection to the textbook could therefore lead pupils to engage in activities that they believe will lead to completing this project. However, the more difficult the goals are to reach, the more developed skills are required from the pupils beforehand, which could argue that project-based goal setting with the textbook in mind is more beneficial when working
with pupils in lower grades. More pupils use their textbooks when trying to learn more about something, than the pupils who use their textbooks when needing support in something. This could be connected to goal setting having more relevance to pupils with higher competences, and most importantly, higher confidence in their competences.

Rewards and attributional feedback (Schunk, 1991) are perhaps the easiest factors not immediately included in the usage of textbooks. Anna describes how she is consistently checking her pupils’ work, both in order to give pupils direct feedback, but also to use in grading. Grading is enough to be counted as a reward, according to Schunk (1991), but is also easily dismissible when it comes to textbook work, exemplified through Jenny seldom using the textbook in class, and Rosa not claiming to grade or give feedback to textbook work. If textbook work is not consistently graded, could it perhaps fuel pupil perception that textbook work is menial and of little importance? Consequently, it could mean that it is not only the structure of the textbook that impacts independent pupil learning, but also the way that teachers use the textbook as part of their classroom. If a textbook is only used as a menial tool to pass time and facilitate planning, pupil learning motivation could be impacted negatively as the future use of such work is hard to perceive.

Finally, the two cognitive factors most prominently featured in textbook usage are also two of the factors mentioned by Schunk (1991) to be a part of teacher insertion into pupil learning, the final being attributional feedback. While Schunk (1991) considers teacher insertion as a valuable and important part to reach pupil learning independence, it could be argued that the requirement for teacher insertion applied to textbooks directly counteracts this. The information processing available in pre-produced textbooks works best when pupils have sufficient scaffolding beforehand, and the textbook does not seem to help high-achieving or low-achieving pupils, as most pupils in this paper admit to not using their textbook for aid or for extra challenges. Consequently, if pupils feel that their textbooks provide neither support nor challenge, and teachers such as Jenny and Rosa continue to argue their dissatisfaction with textbook structure (in both physical and digital textbooks), distribution of task types and variation in content, it might be worthwhile to reconsider the ways that textbooks are used in the EFL classroom.
In this section, the results of the study have been discussed in relation to steering documents and national policies, and from self-efficacy theory, motivation theories, and learning independence perspectives. From a curriculum perspective, it was discussed how textbooks do not support equivalent education from the standpoint that there is not enough support for pupils with learning disabilities (e.g. dyslexia). It was discussed how neither printed nor digital textbooks on their own seem to have a positive impact on pupil self-efficacy, motivation or learning independence, however, there are ways for a teacher to use textbooks as tools that would benefit the three aforementioned aspects of L2 learning.
7. Conclusion

This study aimed to find what reasons teachers argued for employing or avoiding textbooks in the EFL classroom. In addition, different psychological factors of motivation related to language learning were also studied to find the impact of textbook usage on pupil language learning motivation. To conclude the findings that were made, factors impacting how teachers employ textbooks varied, with one teacher using the textbook consistently due to the structure that the textbooks provide. Another teacher used the textbooks in certain areas, such as grammar and writing strategy but avoided parts where her pupils did not relate to the texts, whereas one teacher avoided textbooks since her pupils did not like the structure or the contents.

Regarding the effect that textbooks may have on psychological factors associated with language learning, the main finding in this study is that the textbooks included fail to meet the need for relatedness that is emphasised in the self determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017). This could have a negative impact on pupils’ intrinsic motivation. This notion is further supported as the pupil responses in this study indicates an aversion to independently seek out their textbooks for support or extra challenges. However, this problem could be solved on an individual level by a teacher who knows how to adapt the contents and activities in the textbooks to their pupils.

A lack of variation in difficulty and types of exercises was also a concern expressed by teachers, corroborated with the lack of diversity shown in the pupil responses. This is a more understandable flaw in the printed textbooks, where there is a page limitation, but the amount of space is not an issue in digital textbooks, so in the future, this is a problem that producers of digital textbooks could turn to their advantage by adding a wider spread of content, targeted to pupils on all levels of learning.

When it comes to discrepancies between printed and digital textbooks, there is no unity in what the pupils prefer. Arguably, as shown in figure 4, enough pupils responded that they have strong preferences for either format that perhaps it should be considered whether pupils
should be given a choice of format on an individual level. The majority of pupils in this study are currently using a printed textbook, however, a larger number find digital instructions easier to understand. Furthermore, the teachers in this study argued that physical books lack proper support for pupils with, for example, dyslexia, something that is arguably easier to deal with in digital textbooks. Additionally, using digital textbooks could be harder for pupils that for any reason do not have regular internet access at home. With this in mind, it is clear that there are pros and cons with both physical and digital textbooks when it comes to the aspect of Equivalent Education included in the Swedish curriculum (Skolverket, 2018).

This study was limited to municipalities in southern Sweden. A broader sampling might have given different results. In similar future studies, more schools, as well as teachers, could be included to provide even more credibility to the balance between what format of textbooks are currently commonly used. Future studies on pupil self-efficacy and motivation in the realm of L2 should include other teaching strategies, such as project-based learning. It is also of interest to investigate how digital textbooks should be developed in the future. Future studies could also focus on interviewing pupils about their perceptions of their textbooks, in order to achieve clarity on what they do or do not think is relevant for them learning English. As textbooks currently do little to contribute to pupils’ intrinsic motivation, a focus group interview could be helpful in suggesting what kinds of topics would be beneficial in making textbooks relevant and furthermore increase intrinsic motivation.

To conclude, a textbook, whether digital or printed, is not a useful L2 learning tool on its own, mostly due to its general lack of relatedness between pupils and texts. However, a teacher who utilises the textbook as a resource among other learning materials and tools, and who knows their pupil group well enough to make adaptations according to the learners’ interests, might be able to raise the level of relatedness between pupils and their textbooks, and furthermore, increase the psychological factors positively impacting language learning motivation.
References


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## Appendix A. Interview guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension/tema</th>
<th>Frågor och nyckelbegrepp</th>
<th>Följdfrågor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nyckelbegrepp:</strong> arbetslag, digital, fysisk, skolpolicy, läromedel, elevbehov</td>
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</table>
**Nyckelbegrepp:** engagemang, självständighet, kompetens, autonomi, tillhörighet

### Länkning till kursplan

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Enligt din erfarenhet, är alla förmågor och kunskapskrav från LGR11 inkluderade i läroboken?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I vilken utsträckning är elevernas arbete med läroboken inlämnat och rättat? Får de tillbaka respons?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Nyckelbegrepp:** kunskapskrav, bedömning, feedback/respons, lärandemiljö

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Är deras jobb med läroboken tillräckligt för att du ska kunna bedöma deras förmågor och sätta betyg?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Teacher textbook usage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Questions and keywords</th>
<th>Follow up</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Keywords:</strong> work team, digital, physical, school policy, teaching materials, pupils needs</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pupil self-efficacy and motivation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. What sort of exercises are represented in the textbooks you use?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. What sort of texts are represented in the textbook?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Do you experience that pupils are interested and engaged when working with textbook exercises?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What are your thoughts on the level of difficulty in the textbook?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Keywords:</strong> engagement, independence, subject area (grammar, vocabulary, etc), relatedness, motivation, competence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alignment to policies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. In your experience, are all knowledge requirements and competences covered in the textbook?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To what extent are pupils’ work in textbooks handed in and checked?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Keywords:</strong> knowledge requirements, assessment, feedback, learning environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you experience that you have to explain instructions in the textbook?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In what way do you notice/measure engagement from your pupils?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To what extent does the textbook provide adequate strategies for self-sufficient language acquisition?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you feel like it is enough to assess and grade their competences?</td>
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</table>
Appendix B. Pupil Questionnaire

Högstadietelevers upplevelse av läroböcker i engelska

Hej!
Vi går sista året på lärarutbildningen på Malmö Universitet, och i samband med vårt examensarbete genomför vi nu en undersökning på hur högstadietelevers upplever sina läroböcker i engelska, och hur de upplever att läroböckerna hjälper (eller inte hjälper) dem i språkinlärning.
Vi är därför mycket tacksamma om ni kan ta er tiden att svara på ett antal frågor gällande detta.
Vi kommer inte att publicera någon av dina personliga uppgifter, utan dina svar kommer att fungera som statistik i en större jämförelse av elevers upplevelser.

Detta är inget prov, och det finns således heller inga rätt eller fel svar. Det vi undersöker är er upplevelse.

Du måste svara på alla frågor inom ett avsnitt innan du kan gå vidare med undersökningen.

Stort tack för dina svar,
Emma Svensson och Nanna Linnea Bergman
Ämneslärarprogrammet 7-9, Engelska

*Obligatorisk

1. Vilken årskurs går du i? *

   Markera endast en oval.
   
   ☐ åk 7
   ☐ åk 8
   ☐ åk 9

2. Använder ni digitala eller fysiska läroböcker i engelska? *

   Markera endast en oval.
   
   ☐ Digitala
   ☐ Fysiska
3. Har du erfarenhet av digitala läroböcker i något ämne? *
   
   *Markera endast en oval.*

   [ ] Ja
   [ ] Nej

Läroboksanvändning

4. Hur ofta använder er lärare läroboken i er engelskundervisning? *
   
   *Markera endast en oval.*

   
   1   2   3   4   5
   [ ] Aldrig
   [ ]   [ ]   [ ] Varje lektion

5. Vad för sorts arbetsområden använder ni läroboken till? *

   *Markera alla som gäller.*

   [ ] Läsförrådelse
   [ ] Hörförståelse
   [ ] Grammatik
   [ ] Skrivövningar
   [ ] Inget av ovanstående

6. Vad för sorts arbetsuppgifter använder ni läroboken till? *

   *Markera alla som gäller.*

   [ ] Kryssfrågor
   [ ] Fylla i frågor
   [ ] Diskussionsuppgifter
   [ ] Skrivfrågor
   [ ] Vi använder inte läroboken

Upplevelser av läroboksanvändning
7. I vilken utsträckning känner du att läroboken hjälper dig att nå kunskapskraven i engelska? *

   Markera endast en oval.

   1  2  3  4  5

   Inte alls  0  0  0  0  0  I mycket stor utsträckning

8. I vilken utsträckning känner du att läroboken hjälper dig att förstå vad du ska kunna i engelska? *

   Markera endast en oval.

   1  2  3  4  5

   Inte alls  0  0  0  0  0  I mycket stor utsträckning

9. I vilken utsträckning känner du att det du arbetar med i läroboken bidrar till din bedömning i engelska (t.ex. genom betyg eller återkoppling från lärare)? *

   Markera endast en oval.

   1  2  3  4  5

   Inte alls  0  0  0  0  0  I mycket stor utsträckning

10. I vilken utsträckning känner du att du kan vända dig till läroboken om det är något i din engelskundervisning du inte förstår? *

    Markera endast en oval.

    1  2  3  4  5

    Inte alls  0  0  0  0  0  I mycket stor utsträckning
11. I vilken utsträckning känner du att du kan vända dig till läroboken om det är något i din engelskundervisning du vill veta mer om?  *

Markera endast en oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Inte alls □ □ □ □ □ I mycket hög utsträckning

12. I vilken utsträckning känner du att lärobokens innehåll stämmer överens med dina intressen och åsikter?  *

Markera endast en oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Inte alls □ □ □ □ □ I mycket hög utsträckning

13. I vilken utsträckning kan du på något sätt relatera till lärobokens innehåll?  *

Markera endast en oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Inte alls □ □ □ □ □ I mycket hög utsträckning


Markera endast en oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Föredrar starkt digitala läroböcker □ □ □ □ □ Föredrar starkt fysiska läroböcker

15. Hur upplever du att du förstår instruktioner i digitala läromedel?  *

Markera endast en oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Mycket lätt □ □ □ □ □ Mycket svårt
16. Hur upplever du att du förstärk instruktioner i fysiska läromedel? *

* Markera endast en oval.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mycket lätt</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Mycket svårt</td>
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