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The Functions of Textbooks:

A Textbook Analysis of Text Genres and their Representation

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate which text genres are included in three textbooks intended for the course English 5, and how they are represented. This is done in order to discuss the functions that the textbooks *Blueprint A, Solid Gold* and *Engelska 5 & 6: Outlooks on*, can have in the English classroom. The investigation is conducted through a textbook analysis that includes both a quantitative content analysis to create an overview of the text genres, and a close reading text analysis that investigates the representation of the texts with the help of Bloom's Taxonomy. The investigation finds that all three books contain several different text genres and that they use some of the text genres more frequently than the other books do. This means that the three books have different texts in focus. Since the study also shows that the texts are represented in many different ways, the study concludes that the books can have many different functions, specific for each book and therefore it can be important to evaluate textbooks before using them and to use more than one. However, one major factor that all these three books can help teachers with is to introduce pupils to many different text genres and improve learning by including most of the perspectives introduced by Bloom as important levels of learning.

Key words: textbooks, text genres, text representation, functions, evaluation

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1. Introduction

According to the National Agency for Education [NAE], education in Sweden is dominated by textbooks, and teachers seem to rely on them to a great extent when teaching English (2006, p. 71). Almost every English teacher uses a textbook, and most pupils say that their lessons follow the organization of the textbooks, completely (Lundahl, 2014, p. 56). Textbooks thereby play an important role in educating pupils in the English language. Therefore, it is of interest to know what these textbooks include, in order to know which functions they can fill in the English education. One central part of learning the English language and meeting the aims of the subject is encountering different kinds of texts. The reason for that necessity is made clear by Wray when he concludes research on the topic: "They drew from this work the implication that, unless some attention was actually given to teaching children to operate effectively within the genre structures upon which society is based, children were at risk of being disenfranchised from large parts of wider social life" (Wray, 2005, p. 24). The importance of different kinds of text in the English education is also made clear by a part in the core content that states that pupils should encounter "texts of different kinds and for different purposes, such as manuals, popular science texts and reports" (NAE, 2011). Since texts of different kinds are an important part of education, and education today is strongly influenced by textbooks, texts in textbooks will be the base of the present study.

However, according to Lundahl, it is impossible for a book to cover everything that pupils need to know within a language (2014, p. 58). Therefore, this study will investigate which texts are represented in the textbooks, how they are represented, and which functions the books can have. Those factors, and how books differ from each other, are important for teachers to be aware of when they decide what material to use in the classroom. Hopefully, the investigation of the three English 5 textbooks, *Blueprint A, Solid Gold* and *Engelska 5 & 6: Outlooks on*, will lead to insight into this.

1.1. Aim

The aim of this study is to investigate which text genres are included in three of the textbooks in use in English 5 and how they are represented, in order to discuss what functions textbooks can have in the English classroom.

1.2. Research Questions

1. Which text genres are included in the three coursebooks?
2. How are the two most common text genres in each book represented and what functions do they give the books?
3. How do the three books differ from each other?

2. Background

2.1. "Texts of different kinds"

The core content states that pupils should encounter "texts of different kinds and for different purposes" (NAE, 2011), and therefore it is important to define what "texts of different kinds" refer to in the present study. The NAE explains that texts can be classified into both *text types* and *text genres*, but that genres can be a source of confusion since it can be defined in different ways. However, the NAE refers to text types as "inner qualities" that are concerned with what the text does, for example "argues" (2017, p. 1), and that is not what this study aims to investigate. A genre on the other hand is, according to the NAE, when one understands a text in relation to outer qualities and social situation, for example that a text in a newspaper is an article (2017, p. 4). According to the *Cambridge Dictionary* (n.d.), a genre is "a style that involves a particular set of characteristics". Examples of "characteristics" or "outer qualities" are for example the text's structure (NAE, 2017, p. 5). Therefore, *genre*, with reference to the previous definitions, is the term that is used in this study for "texts of different kinds" in textbooks.

2.2. Previous Research

2.2.1. The Role of Textbooks

In order to understand the relevance of this study, it is important to understand the role that textbooks have in education. The NAE has compiled a report that maps out research concerning that role in Sweden. According to the report, textbooks have a strong position in education, and especially so in the subject of English (NAE, 2006, p.7). The dominance of textbooks is confirmed by Nelson, who concludes that textbooks are important to teachers, because they use them both for planning and for the actual teaching (Nelson, 2012, p. 24). The report from the

NAE (2006, p.11) also concludes that textbooks play an important part in the planning of lessons and in the choice of themes and content. Nelson even refers to studies that show that teachers often rely on their textbook instead of the syllabus, when planning their lessons (2012, p. 18). Internationally, one can also find support for the dominance of textbooks. Knight (2015) has conducted a small study of the use of textbooks in higher education. He concludes that textbooks are generally viewed upon as reliable and a good support for the lectures. He also points out that the teachers do not see the textbook as a peripheral resource, but as a more important resource (Knight, 2015, p. 6).

Since textbooks seem to play a major part in the teaching of English, their texts and contents become an important part of pupils' education. Chegeni therefore states that the choice of textbooks is important, and that teachers need to evaluate them in order to see their functions (2016, p. 2325). Ahmadi and Derakhshan (2016) confirm the importance of textbook evaluation by calling it "necessary and vital" for teachers to find material that can help their students in the best way. Their study compiles textbook evaluations to investigate different strengths and weaknesses that textbooks can have (Ahmadi & Derakhshan, 2016, p. 260). Together with Chegeni's study, it underlines the importance of investigating the functions of different textbooks.

2.2.2. The Importance of Different Texts

A part of the investigation of functions in the present study, focuses on the encountering of different text genres in the books. It does so because, according to Chan (1999, p. 40), the encountering of different texts and genres is important for the language development, and specifically it can help students develop their reading strategies. Yoo's research (2015, p. 83) confirms that by stating that pupils' use of reading strategies changes between text genres. Hence, the larger variety of texts pupils will encounter, the wider range of reading strategies come into use. The importance of encountering different text genres is also confirmed by Wray, who points out another reason to why it is important, namely the fact that in society several different genre structures are used in everyday life, and people need to know how to operate within them. Wray argues that it is important to develop people's "control over the ways text is used for particular purposes in society" (Wray, 2005, p. 24). Even though Wray mostly writes about children, what he writes still applies because different genres still exist in society. In other words, it is important for pupils to encounter different text genres in school because they will encounter them in society and need to be familiar with them. These two reasons show that it is

important for teachers to know which text genres pupils encounter in textbooks, to ensure that they encounter different types in order to develop their language sufficiently and to cope in society.

However, a couple of studies that investigate texts in textbooks conclude that many textbooks do not contain a sufficient number of texts. An example of that is Mohd Sidek's study that aims to determine how well a nationally mandated Malaysian EFL textbook prepares upper secondary students for higher education (2012, p. 27). The study is conducted by analyzing the "reading passages" that are included in the book (Mohd Sidek, 2012, p. 31) and that analysis shows that the book does not meet the standards necessary for preparing students for higher education (Mohd Sidek, 2012, p. 27). One reason for that is that the book puts emphasis on narrative texts rather than expository texts (Mohd Sidek, 2012, p. 36). In opposition, another study, conducted on three Jordanian textbooks, finds that expository texts are dominant in the three textbooks. However, descriptive texts, which are a type of narrative texts, are dominant as well, whilst persuasive texts are almost non-existent in all three textbooks (Freahat, 2015, p. 22). In other words, the different texts are not sufficient in these books either. Although, it is important to acknowledge two factors; both studies investigate if the books contain enough texts to sufficiently prepare pupils for higher education and not to sufficiently teach English; and both studies investigate which types of texts that the textbooks contain in general, and not specifically which text genres. However, both studies underline the difficulty of finding textbooks that contain a sufficient amount of texts.

3. Method of Study

3.1. Method

In order to investigate which text genres are included in the three books, and how they are represented, a textbook analysis was performed. The analysis was conducted in two parts, where the first part categorized the texts into genres to create an overview of the text genres and thereby the different focuses that the books have. This part was also done to find which genres were most frequent, because they would be examined more thoroughly in the second part of the investigation, in order to see how they are represented.

The first part of the investigation was conducted as a quantitative content analysis, with the text genres as the data (Bryman, 2011, p. 281). Certain categories were searched for in the textbooks, by studying the different texts to interpret what genre they belonged to, and by studying the

assignments to see what texts pupils were required to write. The categories were based on the genres represented by the following point in the core content: “Texts of different kinds and for different purposes, such as manuals, popular science texts and reports”. Since it states that pupils should encounter “different kinds” of texts, this investigation included all text genres that could be found in the textbooks. Each text was categorized based on either what the text was called in the book or on the content and structure, in relation to what the books themselves defined as each genre.

However, on some occasions the categorization was difficult because of the similarities between different genres. The texts were then categorized according to which genre it resembled the most. An example of a genre that was difficult to categorize is articles. Therefore, the following definition from the Merriam-Webster dictionary was used as a criterion: “article: nonfictional prose composition usually forming an independent part of a publication” (n.d.). The definition helped distinguish articles from for example factual texts, through the formulation: “part of a publication”, since a text intended for a newspaper usually have certain characteristics, such as columns, subheadings or the author’s name. In the present essay, factual texts refer to texts that contain correct information about specific topics, but are not clearly articles. The articles were divided into two categories since clear differences within the category existed. Several articles expressed opinions and argued for them, and they were categorized as “opinion articles". The opinion articles were distinguished from the opinion essays by the definition of articles. The investigation also found texts that were hard to categorize since they did not belong to a clear category, and therefore they are called what they are; syllabus-parts. The syllabus-parts are parts from the Swedish syllabus for upper secondary school that have been placed into the book.

Some of the genres were also combined into one category, since they resembled each other, and the number of categories would be infinite if the genres were not limited. An example of combined categories is the category “personal narratives”. Personal narratives include blogposts, diary entries and personal reflections (Hallberg, & Backemyr Nyberg, 2019, p. 292). This means that the genre includes a broad spectrum of texts.

In order to conduct the content analysis and keep it organized, a matrix-based method was used. To use this method, called framework, an index of central categories was created out of the genres represented in the core content and in the books (Bryman, 2011, p. 528). This gave the investigation a grounded approach, which meant that categories could be added to the matrix, throughout the investigation (Bryman, 2011, p. 519).

The second part of the investigation looked at the two most common text genres within each book and analyzed how they were represented. The two most common genres were analyzed because they provided a good indication of the book's focus. This part was done through a close reading analysis, where the first two texts within each book and genre were studied carefully to see how they were represented and which functions the books gained through them. However, to create an overview of the text representation, all texts within each genre were briefly looked at to see if something else stood out and to be able to draw general conclusions about the book.

The quantitative content analysis was the best choice of method since the study had a need to investigate the content in several texts to find different genres and categorize them, to create an overview. The grounded approach was added to the method since the study also had a need to include more themes as they were found. This approach was important in order to avoid limitation of the investigation to certain categories. The method of framework was used because it provided a way to organize the data. The method of close reading was used since it provided a way of studying and describing the texts in a non-limited way.

3.2. Material

The books that were examined in this investigation are all intended for the course English 5. That course was chosen since it is the first English course that pupils encounter at upper secondary school, and therefore it is the basis for the following courses.

The choice of the textbooks used in this study, was made from two criteria. First, the textbooks needed to be in use in Swedish schools today and therefore an email, asking which textbooks were used for English 5 at each school, was sent out to and answered by most of the major upper secondary schools in Jönköping. The second criterion that the choice was made from, was which books were available at the library. The books that were used in the schools were therefore checked against the available books in the library and those that were available became the sample of this study. The sample is therefore also a convenience sample (Bryman, 2011, p. 194). Finally, it is important to mention that the results are very dependent on the three textbooks; they could have been completely different if other books were used.

3.2.1. *Blueprint A*

Blueprint A[1] is a textbook intended for English 5 and it is written by Christer Lundfall and Ralf Nyström (2017). The book blends texts with different assignments and examples of different text genres and instructions on how to write them. The assignments sometimes include texts as well. *Blueprint A* ends with the so-called "Blue pages", a resource that includes guidelines and example texts that help pupils with their writing skills.

3.2.2. *Solid Gold*

Solid Gold is also a textbook intended for English 5 and it is written by Eva Hedencrona, Karin Smed-Gerin and Peter Watcyn-Jones (2020). The book has all the texts first, then the resource pages that include text examples and instructions on how to write, and the exercise pages at the end.

3.2.3. *Engelska 5 & 6: Outlooks on*

Engelska 5 & 6: Outlooks on[2] is written by Eva Hallberg and Annika Backemyr Nyberg (2019). Each chapter has a part for both English 5 and English 6 and that structure is supposed to ease repetition of English 5, when studying English 6. This study will however only focus on the English 5 parts. This book also blends texts with assignments, and sometimes also with short texts that contain commentaries on different topics.

3.3. Ethical Considerations

This study has been conducted according to the ethical standards created by the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017). In order to meet their standards, the best method for answering the research questions was chosen and thoroughly described, to create a possibility to recreate the study. The analysis of the textbooks was also conducted in a systematic way and documented accordingly and therefore should be considered reliable. However, the interpretation of the texts might be a source of error since the texts can be interpreted differently by someone else.

[1] From here on referred to as *Blueprint*
[2] From here on referred to as *Outlooks on*

4. Theoretical Framework

The core concept of the present essay is the function of the textbooks in the classroom. To investigate that thoroughly the educational theory of Bloom's taxonomy will be used. The theory was developed by Benjamin Bloom in order to improve the validity of educational practices and has had a large impact on education. The taxonomy includes three parts: The cognitive domain that deals with knowledge; the affective domain that deals with emotions; and the psychomotor domain that deals with actions (Aubrey & Riley, 2016, p. 77-78). All three domains are important parts of learning, but the analysis in the present essay is based on the cognitive domain since that part deals with learning in the classroom (Aubrey & Riley, 2016, p. 82).

The cognitive domain of Bloom's taxonomy states that "cognitive functions can be ordered into six progressively more difficult levels" that should all be included in the learning process (Aubrey & Riley, 2016, p. 77). The six levels are: knowledge; comprehension; application; analysis; synthesis; and evaluation, and according to Bloom, they should occur in that order. However, his taxonomy has been criticized for being both inflexible and for using too vague words to describe the levels. Therefore, some people have argued that the functions do not need to occur in that order, and many have created alternative suggestions to describe the different levels in the cognitive domain. Petty (Aubrey & Riley, 2016, p. 82) suggests that K*nowledge* should be understood as being able to: "state; recall; recognize". *Comprehension* refers to: "explain; describe reason for", and *Application* to: "apply; construct; solve". *Analysis*, can according to Petty, instead be: "break down; compare and contrast", and *Synthesis* as: "summarise; generalise; argue". Finally, *Evaluate* can be understood as being able to: "judge; evaluate; give arguments for and against". The six levels can be used as a framework to ensure a progress in pupils' learning (Aubrey & Riley, 2016, p. 82) and therefore, the present study can use it to analyze the possibility of progression in learning English, when teachers use the textbooks in question. This will be done through a search for the different levels in the books. However, it is advisable to use the theory with a degree of flexibility when it comes to the predetermined hierarchical order (Aubrey & Riley, 2016, p. 84). For example, since the theory focuses on progression, all levels cannot be achieved at once, therefore all levels might not be included in an English 5 textbook. In the present essay, the texts and exercises are therefore viewed as opportunities to practice the skills that are included in each level.

5. Results

The results of the present study will be presented below in the order of the research questions.

5.1. Which Text Genres are Included in the three Textbooks?

The figure below shows the books' number of texts within each genre, and will be explained further, one book at a time.

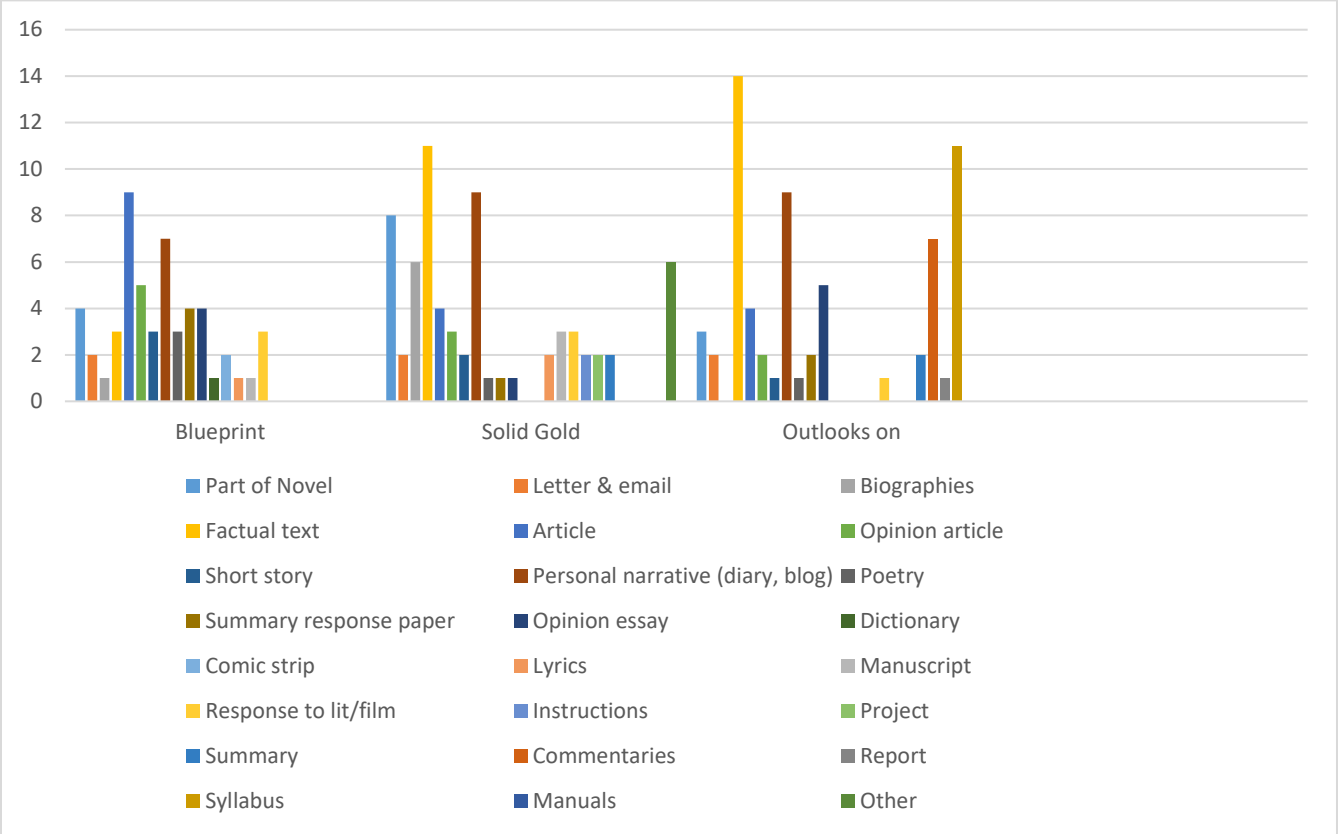

Figure 1. Text genres in all three books.

5.1.1. Blueprint

Three of the text genres in *Blueprint* are slightly more frequent than the other. As can be seen in figure 1, the most frequent genre is by far, articles. Altogether, the readers of the book encounter articles on nine occasions and that includes articles such as news reports, popular-science articles, feature articles and reportage. Another text genre that also occurs several times in the textbook is personal narratives. The third place of the most common text genres in the textbook is, as can be seen in the diagram above, held by opinion articles. The text genres instructions, projects, summaries, commentaries, reports, syllabus, and manuals, on the other hand, are not encountered at all in this book.

5.1.2. Solid Gold

Solid Gold also has a few text genres that dominate the book. The most common one is factual texts, since it can be encountered eleven times in the book. Personal narratives can be encountered almost as many times and parts of novels as well. Those three categories dominate the book, but biographies are not far behind. The genres dictionaries, comic strips, commentaries, reports, manuals, and syllabus-parts cannot not be encountered at all.

5.1.3. Outlooks on

Outlooks on has a clear focus on four of the text genres since they are much more frequent than the remaining eleven. The most common text genre is factual texts, since they can be encountered as many as 14 times in the book. Texts that belong to the syllabus can be encountered almost as many times and personal narratives as well. The genres biographies, dictionaries, comic strips, lyrics, manuscripts, instructions, projects and manuals cannot be encountered in the book.

5.1.4. Analysis

The results of the quantitative content analysis that investigated the text genres in the three books, give indications of the books' focuses and thereby their primary functions. Since each book contains many texts within a few of the genres, the focus could be said to be made up of several genres. However, the present essay includes the two most common text genres in the focus, since a focus refers to the center of interest, and a center cannot be very broad. Therefore, one can say that *Blueprint* has a clear focus on articles and personal narratives. *Solid Gold* also has a focus on personal narratives, but an even bigger focus on factual texts since they are the most common. *Outlooks on*, on the other hand, has many factual texts and texts from the syllabus, and therefore primarily has its focus there. The following part has therefore analyzed the two text genres in focus in each book to see how they are represented.

5.2. How are the two Most Common Texts Genres in each Book Represented and what Functions do they Give the Books?

In order to structure the result, this part will be presented book by book, starting with the most common text genre.

5.2.1. The Most Common Text Genre in Blueprint

The most common text genre in *Blueprint* is articles, and they are represented by a popular science article that puts focus on how it is written and brings up an important topic and thereby creates a discussion. The first page begins with a "pre-reading box" that calls the text a "science article" and also points out the structure of it and gives the reader instructions to first skim the article to find certain characteristics and then read it more closely. This makes the genre clear and helps pupils see its structure. The article begins by stating that "plastic now pollutes every corner of the earth" (Lundfall & Nyström, 2017, p. 32) and is followed by two exercises that ask the reader to first find answers in the text and secondly discuss the topic. The purpose of the text is, in other words, both to understand the characteristics of the genre, but also to understand and discuss the topic.

The articles are also represented by another popular science article that brings up an important topic to discuss (Lundfall & Nyström, 2017, p. 65-67). The article explains advertising and how it uses product placement on screen. The text has a long introduction that explains the topic of the article and brings up questions that are answered in it. The questions put emphasis on what is important in the article, and that is the issue of product placement. The article is followed by exercises that check if the reader has understood the text and asks them to discuss it, which shows that the purpose of the text is to understand and discuss it.

To summarize, one can say that the articles in *Blueprint* are represented by several different types of articles, but they all function as a way to bring up important topics and discuss them. Many of them, and especially the model in the resource pages (Lundfall & Nyström, 2017, p.273), also function as a way to teach the structure of articles and how to write them. By just reading the article and looking at its structure, pupils can learn to recognize articles and thereby receive the opportunity to practice the skills within the first level of *Knowledge*, in the cognitive domain of Bloom's taxonomy. By answering questions about the article pupils explain it and thereby practices the level of *Comprehension*, and by discussing the article they practice the skills within the level of *Analysis*. However, since they do not receive an opportunity to for example write an article, they do not practice the level of *Application* within this genre.

5.2.2. The Second Most Common Text Genre in Blueprint

The genre personal narratives is the second most common text genre in *Blueprint* and it is represented by for example an exercise that instructs pupils to express their reactions and reflections (Lundfall & Nyström, 2017, p. 31). The exercise does not include a model; it does however, include a couple of sentence-beginnings to help pupils reflect. The instructions do not mention the genre, which also indicates that the purpose of this exercise is not for the pupils to encounter the genre, but for them to reflect on a listening exercise.

The personal narratives in this book are represented by another exercise, but this exercise is used to both make pupils reflect, but also to introduce them to the genre (Lundfall & Nyström, 2017, p.53-55). This becomes clear since it is referred to as a personal narrative, and the exercise both explains what a personal narrative is and presents an assignment for the pupils to write one. Additionally, an example text is included, as well as a model, which give pupils an opportunity to encounter a proper personal narrative. However, the exercise also instructs the pupils to reflect on the experience they write about in their personal narrative: "explain why this experience or person is so important to you" (Lundfall & Nyström, 2017, p.54), and therefore the purpose of the text is also to reflect.

To summarize, one can say that in *Blueprint*, personal narratives are only represented by exercises that function as ways to reflect on different topics or situations. It can also be said that there seem to be two types of personal narratives, one proper type that has certain characteristics and a structure that can be seen in a model, and another type that is more casual. The proper type also functions as a way to teach pupils how to write correctly within the genre. Since there are no personal narratives to read, the genre mostly gives pupils the opportunity to practice the skills within the level of *Comprehension* and *Analysis*, since *Comprehension* deals with explaining and *Analysis* deals with breaking down and comparing. However, a few of the narratives also give pupils the opportunity to *Apply* their knowledge of writing personal narratives.

5.2.3. The Most Common Text Genre in *Solid Gold*

The most common text genre in *Solid Gold* is factual texts and they are represented by for example a text that gives an overview of twelve famous people (Hedencrona et al., 2014, p. 48-59). The purpose of the text becomes clear when one reads the exercises belonging to the text. It explains that pupils should choose one of the people and write a project about them (Hedencrona et al., 2014, p. 209), so the text is there to give an overview and background.

The factual texts in the book are also represented by a text about New York that is used as a way to teach pupils about the city (Hedencrona e. al., 2014, p. 64-67). The text talks about New York, under different rubrics, such as “Manhattan”, and includes pictures of some of the things mentioned. This together with the introduction makes the text very clear and easy to follow, which underlines the topic itself as the purpose of the text. There are, however, no instructions on what to do with the text, but in the exercise pages, there is an exercise to see what the pupils remember of the text (Hedencrona et al., 2014, p230). This also indicates that the purpose of the text is to teach pupils about New York.

In summary, the many factual texts in *Solid Gold* creates a focus on them. Most of them are represented by texts that reveal their purpose of teaching pupils about specific topics, in the exercise pages. Since the pupils are never given an exercise to write a factual text, the genre is not included in the resource pages and the texts are never called factual texts; the purpose is not to help pupils recognize or write factual texts. Instead, the factual texts in *Solid Gold* give pupils an opportunity to practice the skills within the level of *Knowledge*, through learning and recalling information about the topic, as answers to the questions. The questions to the texts also provide the opportunity to explain, and thereby reach the level of *Comprehension*. However, the other four levels are not included since pupils are not asked to do anything else with the texts.

5.2.4. The Second Most Common Text Genre in *Solid Gold*

In *Solid Gold* personal narratives is the second most common text genre and they are represented by for example a text that is not referred to as a personal narrative but tells a personal story with the purpose of bringing up an interesting topic for discussion (Hedencrona et al., 2014, p. 25-26). This becomes clear in the discussion questions that belongs to the text, since they bring attention to the debated topic of wild animals in captivity (Hedencrona et al., 2014, p. 171).

The personal narratives are also represented by another text that is used to bring up an important topic to discuss, from a personal perspective (Hedencrona et al., 2014, p. 28-29). Personal reflections such as “Please, don’t let him ask any more questions” (Hedencrona et al., 2014, p.28), give the reader the insight that all people do not appreciate curious questions, which can be important to discuss. This personal narrative also has discussion questions belonging to it, that indicate that the purpose is to discuss that topic (Hedencrona et al., 2014, p.180).

To summarize, one can say that all the encounters of personal narratives in *Solid Gold* are text encounters and not exercises. All the texts include a story told in a personal way and the author's reflections on it, and they all include discussion questions, which indicates that they all bring up important topics to discuss, but from a personal point, which gives pupils opportunities to see the topics from another perspective. The personal narratives in *Solid Gold* create opportunities for pupils to use skills within the level of *Knowledge*, such as recalling and recognizing, by asking them questions. The discussion questions also create opportunities to practice the skills of explaining and describing, to reach the level of *Comprehension.* However, the other levels are not practiced, since the book does not provide an opportunity to *Apply* the knowledge by for example writing a personal narrative.

5.2.5. The Most Common Text Genre in *Outlooks on*

Just as in *Solid Gold*, the most common text genre in *Outlooks on* is factual texts and they are represented by for example a text that serves as an introduction to the texts that follow (Hallberg & Backemyr Nyberg, 2019). The text does not include an introduction or exercise, but it precedes a text about three Namibian teenagers, and since Namibia is brought up in the present factual text as an English-speaking country, the purpose of the text becomes clear. It introduces the next text by explaining its relevance.

The factual texts in *Outlooks on* are also represented by a text that is used to help pupils understand more about their school (Hallberg & Backemyr Nyberg, 2019, p. 23). The text is not called a factual text, but it explains important information about the upper secondary school and has an introduction that explains that the information is important to know, in order to explain the Swedish school when one is abroad. Then the pupils practice that explanation in the exercise that follows the text (Hallberg & Backemyr Nyberg, 2019, p. 23).

To summarize, one can say that *Outlooks on* contains many factual texts that all have a clear purpose and connection to texts and exercises around them. The purpose of all the texts is to learn something that is useful for them in school. The book even includes factual texts about how to learn different language skills (Hallberg & Backemyr Nyberg, 2019, p.67). The clear purpose as to why pupils should read the texts, and the number of factual texts, highlight this genre as an important part of the book and give the book a focus on aspects that are relevant in pupils' lives. The book also contains an exercise that specifically asks the pupils to write a factual text. Therefore, readers of the book, receive one opportunity to *Apply* their knowledge of factual texts. They also receive several opportunities to *Apply* the facts about the language skills and about school, since for example an exercise to explain the Swedish school is included.

The book also gives pupils opportunities to practice the skills for both the level of *Knowledge* and of *Comprehension*, since they learn facts and sometimes explain them in exercises.

5.2.6. The Second Most Common Text Genre in *Outlooks on*

The second most common text genre in *Outlook on* is parts from the syllabus for English 5. It is represented by for example knowledge requirements, with the purpose of connecting the chapter to the syllabus. (Hallberg & Backemyr Nyberg, 2019, p. 45). The knowledge requirements explain that pupils need to be able to "discuss in basic terms some features in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used". This text comes at the end of a chapter that discusses the Swedish school in comparison to schools in English-speaking countries, and therefore it is clear that the purpose of it is to connect the previous parts to the syllabus, in order for pupils to understand why it is included in the book.

The parts from the syllabus are also represented by two other parts of the knowledge requirements: "communication" and "interaction" (Hallberg & Backemyr Nyberg, 2019, p. 67). The text explains what the pupils need to be able to do within those areas, to receive a passing grade. This time it is in connection to a text about how to learn new words, so the purpose of this text is the same as the last text.

In summary, the syllabus is mostly represented by knowledge requirements, but also through short texts that explain parts of the core content. An example of that can be seen right before a report, where a short text explains that according to the core content, pupils need to be able to read reports (Hallberg & Backemyr Nyberg, 2019, p. 120). The purpose of including these parts from the syllabus is to show pupils its connection to the book. By making the connection clear, the book gives pupils an opportunity to both *Apply* and *Analyze* their *Knowledge* about the syllabus and compare it to what is included in the book.

5.3. How do the three Books Differ from Each Other?

The results clearly indicate that each book has a different focus and can thereby have different functions. To show how the functions can differ between books, the results of the textbook analysis will be compared here.

5.3.1. Focus on Different Text Genres.

One way to see indications of the different functions of the books is to compare each book's focus on different text genres.

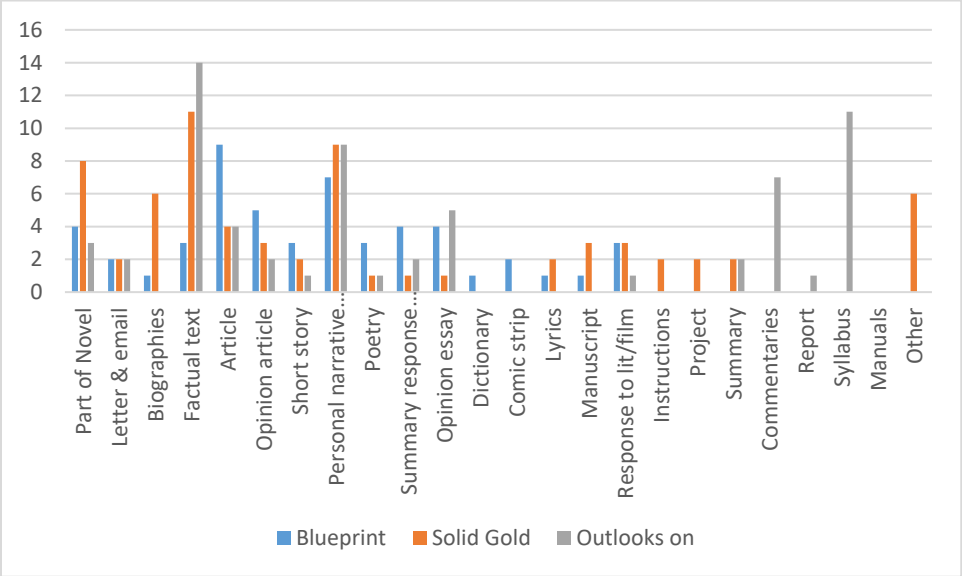

Figure 2. Text genres in each book.

Figure 2 clearly indicates that *Blueprint* can function as a way to work with articles and personal narratives, whilst *Solid Gold* is better used to work with factual texts, but also personal narratives. The figure also shows that *Outlooks on* can function as a way to work with factual texts and personal narratives. However, parts from the syllabus are more common, and that is a unique text genre for this book.

There are also other text genres that stand out in the different books. *Outlooks on* works with commentaries from Namibian pupils for example (Hallberg & Backemyr Nyberg, 2019, p.15), and that is unique for that book. It increases the book's connection to the knowledge requirement that involves other English-speaking countries. Another aspect that makes *Outlooks on* stand out is that it is the only one of the books that includes a report (Hallberg & Backemyr Nyberg, 2019, p.21), even though that genre is specifically mentioned in the core content. *Solid Gold*, on the other hand, contains several texts that are difficult to categorize and therefore the category "other" stands out. This might indicate that genres are not important in

this textbook, and that indication is underlined by the fact that most texts do not mention genre. If only *Solid Gold* is used, without further explanation, this might lead to pupils not recognizing different genres. *Blueprint* stands out by having a clear focus on articles, since both the most common and third common genre involve articles.

The books obviously have some aspects in common as well. For example, all three of them has around eight personal narratives, which means that they all have a focus on that genre. Another similarity is that none of them focus on manuals or reports, the genres mentioned in the core content. However, they all include many different genres.

5.3.2. The Function of the Books

Since the three books all focus on different texts, it is difficult to compare those texts to each other, therefore this will be a comparison of the functions that the most common texts and their representation can give the books.

If the book *Blueprint* is used in the classroom, it can for example function as a way for pupils to encounter different types of articles. They will learn how to write, recognize, and read them, and through them the pupils will encounter many relevant discussion topics from different perspectives, and thereby develop their discussion skills. If, on the other hand, *Solid Gold* is used, it can instead function as a way for pupils to encounter factual texts and thereby learn about different, but specific topics. By just using this book, pupils will however, not practice how to write in this text genre, and it will not promote discussions. The functions of *Outlooks on*, where students also encounter several factual texts, are however, that pupils will practice writing factual texts. Although, the primary function of the book is that pupils learn new information that is useful for them in school. The book's use of clear themes and clear connections between texts enhances the learning function further, since it functions to help pupils understand the purpose of the factual text.

Another function that *Blueprint* has is that it gives pupils many opportunities to write personal narratives and thereby to reflect on topics and situations. These encounters might also lead them to discover personal narratives as a good way of reflecting in general. *Blueprint* also has the function of teaching pupils how to write personal narratives. One of the functions of *Solid Gold* is similar since it also contains many personal narratives and instructions on how to write them. However, this book does not provide opportunities for pupils to write their own, and therefore does not function as a reflection for pupils. Instead, the book offers opportunities to read about important topics from someone's personal perspective and then discuss them. The book

Outlooks on, also includes many personal narratives, however, the book includes even more parts from the syllabus, and therefore primarily functions as a way to show the texts' connection to the syllabus. Hopefully that function helps pupils understand what the teacher wants them to focus on and thereby helps them work towards the subject's aim.

The books' different functions create opportunities to practice the skills involved in Bloom's taxonomy. All of them give pupils opportunities to practice the skills involved in the levels *Knowledge* and *Comprehension*, but only *Blueprint* and *Outlooks on* give opportunities to practice the skills at the levels *Application* and *Analysis*. None of the books include opportunities to practice the skills at the final two levels; *Synthesis* and *Evaluation*.

6. Discussion

When one becomes aware of the extent of teachers' use of textbooks in English education, one realizes the importance of suitable textbooks. As previous research shows, textbooks play an important role in English classrooms, since most teachers use a textbook regularly, and plan their lessons according to it. The more a teacher uses a textbook, the more important it is to make sure that it has functions that suit the specific class. The results of this study can work as a help for teachers to discover the functions of textbooks in general and these books in specific.

One example of what this study can help teachers discover is how many and which text genres each book includes. According to Chan's research (1999) it is important to encounter different text genres to learn a language, and according to Wray (2005) it is also important to encounter different text genres to be able to operate in society. Hence, it is encouraging to see that all three books contain a high amount of different genres, which indicates that textbooks in general, can function as a way for pupils to encounter different text genres. However, many genres are missing, specifically manuals and reports, which are mentioned in the syllabus, therefore teachers need to complement their teaching with other texts. This study has also made the difficulty of categorizing the texts into genres evident, since many texts, especially in *Solid Gold*, are not referred to by genres. This indicates that categorizing texts in textbooks can be difficult for teachers in general, and even more difficult for pupils, and that is another reason for teachers to complement textbooks with other texts that refer to the texts by genre, so that pupils learn how to recognize genres. Alternatively, the teachers themselves need to identify and refer to the texts' genres.

The number of different texts in textbooks is also investigated by Mohd Sidek, and he states that textbooks do not include sufficient texts to prepare pupils for higher education. However, this refers to the books that have been analyzed in that particular study, and in reference to higher education. The present study only investigates what textbooks can contribute with and whether it is sufficient to prepare pupils for higher education is for another study to investigate. In general, however, all studies conclude that textbooks contain different text genres and therefore it is safe to conclude that textbooks can function as a way to introduce different text genres.

With regards to what other functions textbooks can have, it is difficult to generalize because, as this study concludes: it differs between books. Textbooks have different strengths and weaknesses, and thereby different functions. The different strengths and weaknesses are brought up in previous research and they are the reason for why teachers should evaluate textbooks. The present study, together with previous research by for example Ahmadi and Derakhshan (2016), underline the importance of evaluating or identifying the functions of different textbooks, and hopefully it can be used by teachers to discover the functions of *Blueprint, Solid Gold* and *Outlooks on*.

Even though it is difficult to generalize, one can draw some general conclusions based on the analysis of the three books. For example: textbooks can function as a way to introduce different text genres, and how to write specific texts. Textbooks can also be used to introduce discussion topics, personal narratives and useful facts, and as a way to show the lessons' connection to the syllabus. Finally, they can also function as a way for teachers to include many of the different levels in Bloom's taxonomy in their teaching, to ensure that pupils encounter opportunities to practice the different skills that they need to learn in the subject of English. These functions are important for teachers to be aware of so they can use their teaching materials as efficiently as possible. It is, however, also important to remember that textbooks have many more functions, since the present study only includes three books, and their primary functions.

However, when one sees these different functions that textbooks can have, one cannot help to question the fact that many teachers seem to base their teaching on only one textbook. It seems as if the result of the present study, and Mohd Sidek's and Freahat's studies, indicate that if one uses only one book, one misses many important parts of the English subject that are not included in that book, not the least the genres mentioned by the syllabus: manuals and reports. Therefore, it might be better to use a combination of books, that have been evaluated to find out their functions, and maybe also complement with other texts and activities.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion one can say that the analysis of the books shows that all three books contain a high number of different text genres. Although, the books differ in which text genres they contain, which are the most common ones and in the frequency of certain text genres. This means that the three books have different focuses and thereby they mostly have different functions in the English classroom. The analysis of the books also shows that the representation of the texts differs between the books, but that there are similarities as well. How the texts are represented effects the books' functions in the classroom.

To conclude the analysis of text representation in the textbooks, one can say that *Blueprint* can foremost function as a way to introduce pupils to different types of articles. The articles help teachers bring up relevant topics of discussion, from different point of views, and to teach pupils how to write certain articles. The textbook also helps teachers introduce pupils to personal narratives and thereby make pupils reflect on different topics and hopefully also learn how to use the genre for their own reflections. *Solid Gold* on the other hand, functions as a way to introduce pupils to foremost factual texts, and thereby many interesting facts. *Solid Gold* also uses personal narratives, however, they do not help pupils reflect, but instead bring up interesting discussion topics from a personal perspective. If teachers on the other hand use *Outlooks on*, they also receive help to present factual texts to the pupils, and thereby teach pupils about different specific topics. However, the factual texts also function as a way to help teachers follow a red thread in their teaching, by for example giving pupils background information about different topics in the book. The factual texts in this book also teach pupils how to develop their language skills. *Outlooks on* also functions as a connection between the lessons and the syllabus since it includes parts from the syllabus.

All the books differ in their functions, and these different functions, underline the importance of evaluating textbooks, but also the importance of combining books and other texts when teaching. However, they can all function as ways to introduce different text genres and give opportunities to practice many of the language skills that are needed to learn English, according to Bloom's taxonomy.

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